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50th ANNIVERSARY ISSUE

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COMMENT

GAVIN HAMILTON, Editor
gavin_hamilton@ipcmedia.com

HOW TO CELEBRATE 50 years of *World Soccer* in one issue? An almost impossible task, given that so much has happened and so much has altered since the magazine first appeared in October 1960.

Yet although the game has witnessed incredible change over the past five decades, much has stayed the same.

To illustrate the point, it's worth reprinting, in its entirety, this editorial from September 1961, when *World Soccer* celebrated its first anniversary:

Now that the first 12 editions of World Soccer have appeared, we are pleased to say, eagerly received by serious soccer enthusiasts everywhere, this birthday time provides a real opportunity to reflect on the past year.

In our first edition, we made it known that we intended to fulfil an editorial policy which would meet with the requirements of enthusiasts of all nationalities. We added that, although produced in London, the world's greatest city and stronghold of soccer, World Soccer would endeavour to present a well-balanced editorial content that would not be biased or give preferential treatment to any one country.

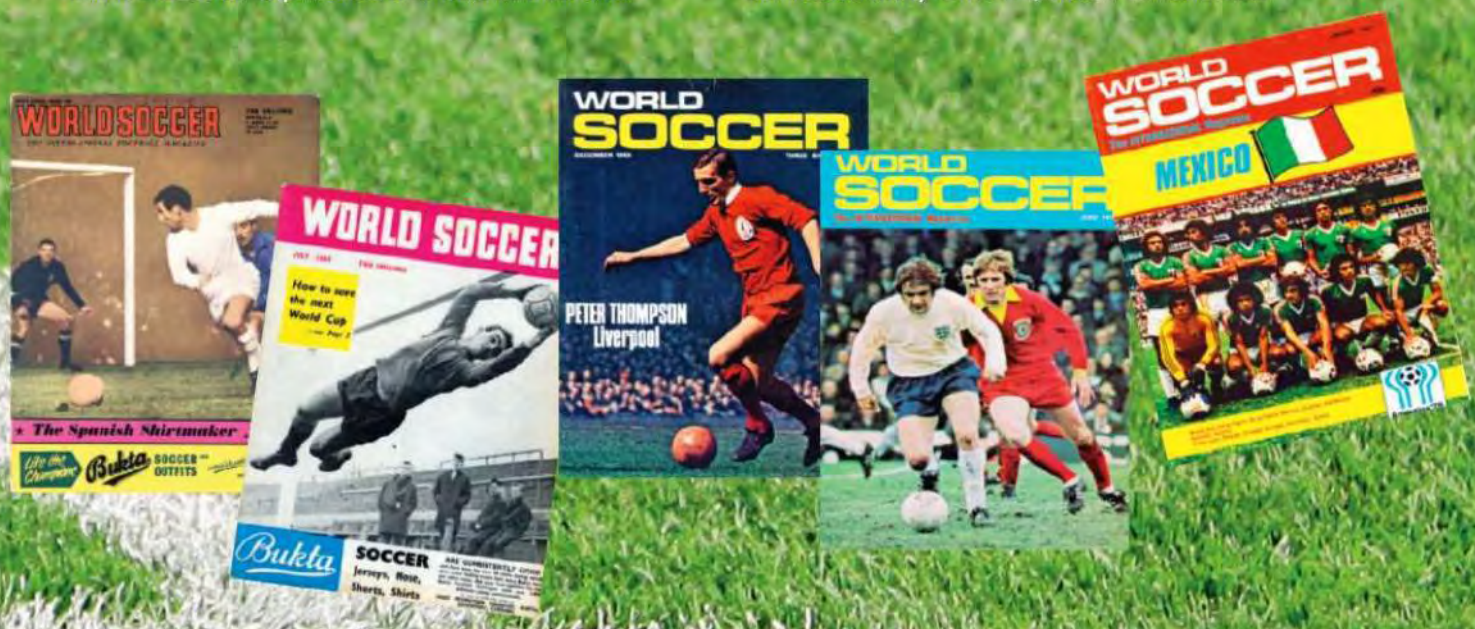
Judging by the many letters of congratulations we have received since October, it would seem that we have succeeded somewhat in that daring ambition.

We have been told that we have mapped some paths through the previously impenetrable forests of confusion.

World Soccer is the first-ever international soccer magazine which has attempted to link a myriad of already healthy individual organisations and peoples together under a common denominator of the game. Though we may say it ourselves, we have had few criticisms: rather they have been constructive suggestions for the future and everyone is united in the thought that the content material has improved with each succeeding edition.

This is all tremendously heartening and makes our task well worthwhile. Language has been no barrier to World Soccer. English is the most common language in the world at the moment and our articles and comments have been widely acclaimed from Paris to Peking and from Barcelona to Buenos Aires.

Our first birthday is with us, but we do not intend



First birthday... *World Soccer* editorial, October 1961

to pause for breath. The next 12 months are vital ones for international soccer, containing the World Cup finals in Chile. World Soccer will take you through the months and will leave no facet of events untouched. To the millions who will be unable to attend in Santiago next June, our World Cup "special" editions will provide the background, the atmosphere and the information which even the most insatiable appetite demands.

The future is exciting for us. From our point of view, there is much work in store; many statistics to be prepared; many conclusions to be drawn and observations. In consequence, our readers also have much to anticipate and we can do no more than hope that, on our second anniversary, an even stronger friendship has been achieved.

If we can continue to progress in the future as we have done in the past then we feel we shall be developing on common ground acceptable to all. To all those readers who have contributed to the position we now find ourselves in at the moment, by their support of the magazine, we thank you most sincerely and trust our efforts will continue to lend themselves to your satisfaction.

Like a giant universal text book, we would like to think that World Soccer will find its way on to the desks of a hundred different schools where it will help the keener students of the game to a better understanding. Suggestions for the improvement of the magazine are always welcome. If readers would like some particular aspect of the game highlighted or, alternatively, feel we could devote more space to certain activities, then we shall be pleased to hear from them.

● I doubt that when those words were written, 49 years ago, associate editors Graham Payne and Jack Rollin believed *World Soccer* would be celebrating its 50th anniversary as Britain's oldest and most respected football publication.

Yet, here we are, in October 2010, looking back on five incredible decades.

It would have been too huge a task to chronicle the past 50 years of the game in one issue of *World Soccer*. So we decided to celebrate 50 years and reflect on how the game has changed by speaking to 50 of the greatest players of the past half-century; the individuals who, in our opinion, have left a lasting impact on the game.

Hopefully, our interviews will provide an interesting snapshot of the past 50 years, and spark debate and discussion.

Our selection of players is not intended to be a definitive list of the greatest-ever living players. Arguably the greatest player of all, Alfredo Di Stefano, was too ill to talk, while others requested money and were politely declined.

The selection reflects our international outlook; many of the players featured would probably not make a list if the wider public had been consulted. Had that been the case, I suspect Bobby Charlton and George Eastham would not be the only Englishmen featured, nor would there have been quite so many non-Europeans.

But our commitment to the wider

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international picture has always been a hallmark of *World Soccer*. Our aim has always been to reach the parts that other publications cannot, or do not wish to, reach. In a digital age, that also extends to reaching the stories that Google cannot unearth.

While the values of the magazine remain the same, one thing has changed. The word "soccer" has come to be used as a term of derision in some quarters. While narrow-minded souls in the UK associate the word "soccer" with the Americanisation of sport, its usage actually dates back to the earliest origins of the game in 19th century England. When the two codes – Rugby Football and Association Football – split, Rugby was nicknamed "rugger", so Association – or Assoc – Football became known as soccer.

History lesson aside, we're proud to have a substantial readership in the United States, just as we are proud of all our readers, all around the globe. Without you, and without our contributors, the past 50 years would not have been possible.

Thanks to everybody and here's to the next half-century. ●

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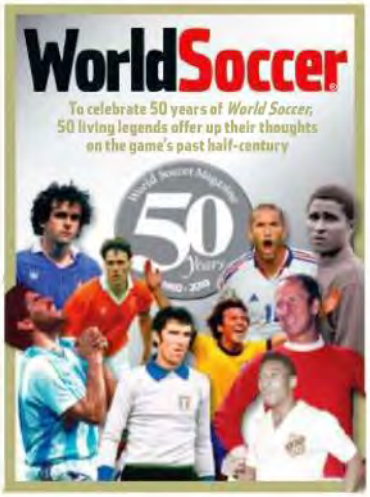
...from the 70s, Muller, Panenka and Kempes
...from the 80s, Rossi, Rush and Platini
...from the 90s, Milla, Weah and Francescoli
...from the 00s, Shevchenko, Nedved and Zidane



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...IN PICTURES

The global game caught on camera

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Heads up...Seongnam Ilhwa (in yellow) defend a free-kick in the all-South Korean AFC Champions League quarter-final against Suwon Bluewings

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Under attack...Roma's Marco Boriello takes evasive action against the feet of a Bologna opponent

Up, up and away...Kenwyne Jones celebrates his goal for Stoke City against Aston Villa

Irish cheer...Stephen Craigan celebrates Northern Ireland's 1-0 win away to Slovenia in their Euro 2012 qualifier

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Bloody painful...Barcelona defender Gerard Pique suffers a cut head against Hercules in La Liga

Lighting the way...fans of Bolivia's Oriente Petrolero get behind their team in the Sudamericana Cup

Time out...Paris Saint-Germain's Zoumana Camara (left) and Sevilla's Frederic Kanoute take a breather during their UEFA Europa League encounter

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Brian Glanville

...on Wayne Rooney and prostitutes...racism in Russia...the changing face of the European Cup...and 50 years of *World Soccer*

THE ROONEY AFFAIR. Squalid but surely avoidable. The trouble today for our young millionaires, unless like three of Rooney's fellow England players they can successfully take out a gagging injunction, are scheming girls – prostitutes or otherwise – who are not only unsatisfied by large payments for their services but then go to a predatory newspaper and make more money still by selling the lubricious story for publication.

Mind you, it is not only footballers who fall into these traps; they can even close in on deluded old buffers such as Lord Triesman.

There was anger and disapproval among football journalists themselves when the *Mail On Sunday* published the embarrassing revelations of a greedy little girl who sold them the embarrassing tale of her liaison with the chief FA honcho.

Today's footballers are no better or worse than those of the past. They simply have immensely more money, and as Oscar Wilde once declared: "I can resist anything except temptation."

Those who have been covering the game as long as myself will know many a tale of what might politely be called romantic excesses by players of old; long before the maximum wage was abolished in 1961.

These young footballers for the most part have their brains in their boots, coming from working-class homes too often with scant education. Even if our comprehensives were vastly better than they were, and all my children went there, clubs swoop so suddenly on seemingly talented boys, even as mere children, that any kind of education, even if they could get it, becomes a remote possibility.

> "Young footballers for the most part have their brains in their boots"

Playing away...Rooney with his wife, Coleen

It is not for me or any of us to "forgive" Rooney for his trespasses, only for his humiliated wife who has seemingly done so after he abandoned a surprisingly defiant posture. If there was a glint of humour about it all, it surely came when Rooney's father-in-law declared that his son-in-law would never be welcome in his house again. Didn't Rooney pay for that house?

The news that Rooney's female nemesis had attended a public school reactivated a joke I'd not thought of since it was round and about in 1951...

A man goes into a house of ill fame and is duly accommodated by a prostitute. Afterwards, he says to her: "You're extremely well spoken. Did you have a good education?"

"Actually, I was at Roedean," she replies.

"And then?" he asks.

"The usual: a year at finishing school in Switzerland, in Geneva."

"And then?"

"Then a year-and-a-half at the Sorbonne, in Paris."

"So what are you doing in a place like this?"

"I don't know," she says. "Just lucky, I suppose."

HOW sad to hear David Beckham has been sent to go grovelling to the emetic Jack Warner of Trinidad, a man whose greed and influence, as so well documented in Andrew Jennings' book *Foul!*, controls votes in that squalid organisation CONCACAF. If this is the price of obtaining the 2018 World Cup for England it is surely excessively high.

Anyway, it seems more and more likely that it will scandalously go to Russia. The most obvious argument against this, that racism is horribly endemic in Russian football, has almost incredibly been brushed aside by FIFA declaring that racism will not be a consideration in choosing the 2018 hosts.

What then of that profoundly hypocritical campaign to kick out racism? For me its utter irrelevance was never better shown than during the 2006 World Cup when there was something of a ceremony about it before a match played by Ukraine – at the end of whose line of players stood their manager and former star Oleg Blokhin, who had quite recently made a vitriolic attack on black players, asserting that there was no place for them in Ukrainian football.

As for the Russians, cases of racism proliferate, most recently the jeering of black players when Russia played Andorra. The president of the Russian federation insisted that the culprits could not be Russians, then belatedly had to eat his words. Not long ago the Dutch manager Dick Advocaat admitted he could never sign a black player for Zenit St Petersburg for fear of the vicious abuse he would suffer.

And now we have the sombre

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Making a stand...Russia at Euro 2008

example of the bigoted fans of Lokomotiv Moscow putting up a banner to salute the transfer of their Nigerian attacker Peter Odemwingie to West Bromwich Albion, with the words "Thank you West Bromwich" and a picture of a banana.

Of course there was the usual apologist official to assure us that the banana was just an old Russian joke which had nothing to do with racism. Of course not.

WHEN Alex Ferguson put out what might be described as a skeleton team in the European Cup against plodding, negative, ultra-defensive Rangers, a new and somewhat alarming moment in European football had surely been reached. The apex of European club football witnessed United, the first-ever English winners of the trophy in 1968 and champions again under Ferguson in Barcelona, snubbing the competition in favour of an upcoming league game against a struggling Liverpool team.

I have little doubt that had Dimitar Berbatov played against Rangers, his splendid, menacing subtlety would have allowed them to breach that over-manned Rangers defence. And the equally absent Paul Scholes would have made a difference too. But as against that I can imagine Ferguson could answer that Berbatov might have been injured and thus unable to score that superb hat-trick against Liverpool.

Ferguson's decision, however, has properly initiated a debate over the formula of the European Cup, in which champions now are almost at a premium with some countries able to field as many as four clubs. It has properly been asserted that the existence of groups militates against the essence of a cup competition.

In fact, it wasn't so long ago, absurdly, that there were even two group stages, which led to the possibility of corruption when lesser teams fell out of the running for qualification. At least one Russian club was highly suspect. The grim truth is that under the greedy pressure of the leading clubs – the ineffable Silvio Berlusconi having some years ago frightened UEFA silly with his schemes – UEFA has been driven into abandoning the good old home-and-away aggregate knockout system.

We shall, I fear, never get it back for money talks – at the top of its voice.

WORLD SOCCER began, humbly but ambitiously enough, 50 years ago. I myself joined its columns in 1963 and over those five decades football has been utterly transformed.

It seems extraordinary now to think that the iniquitous maximum wage endured until 1961, then at last disappeared thanks chiefly to the stalwart efforts of the often unfairly lampooned Jimmy Hill.

Televised football was barely in its infancy and an unholy cabal of the BBC and ITV sports moguls saw to it that payments to clubs remained derisory. What a fuss there was when the notorious Robert Maxwell proposed that the clubs should be paid £50million!

But with the advent of satellite television and the birth of what I called the "Greed Is Good" league, football was suddenly awash with money and players grew unthinkably rich, while the lesser clubs were betrayed by the FA – the very organisation whose mission was surely to protect them.

Players and journalists no longer mixed as once they did. Ticket prices rose vertiginously out of the reach of working-class fans who had made the game what it was...and is.

Meanwhile, when Stanley Rous was deviously ousted as president of FIFA by the appalling Joao Havelange, morality at international level went out of the window. Now we have the Brazilian's seemingly immovable successor, the Swiss Sepp Blatter, of whom that German journalist once aptly said: "Sepp Blatter has 50 new ideas every day; and 51 of them are bad."

But how do you get rid of him? ●

Keeping it tight...Rangers' Madjid Bougherra (right)

GOALS
WE'D LIKE TO SEE AGAIN...

Intricate...Messi

1 Lionel Messi, Barcelona v Panathinaikos
Intricate footwork, showcasing Barca at their best with a 20-pass move

Superb...Inzaghi

2 Filippo Inzaghi, Milan v Barcelona
Superb left-footed finish in a friendly

3 Choy Gonzalez, Arsenal Sarandi v Independiente
Neat footwork followed by a finish from an acute angle

4 Hamit Altintop, Turkey v Kazakhstan
Meets a corner with a brilliant volley

5 Brice Jovial, Le Havre v Reims
An audacious assist from team-mate Hassane Alla

6 Edmar, Metalist Kharkiv v Debrecen
A back-heel volley from edge of six-yard area following a corner

Backheel...Edmar

AND ONE TO FORGET...

Khalid Askri, FAR Rabat v MAS Fes
The Rabat goalkeeper saved a penalty in a Moroccan Cup shoot-out and walked away in triumph...only for the ball to spin back over the line and nestle in the net

To see clips of these goals, visit www.worldsoccer.com

NUMBERS GAME

97
breakfasts claimed on expenses during a 20-day trip to Vancouver by Russian FIFA exco member Vitaliy Mutko

£350m
spending by English Premier League clubs in this summer's transfer window, down 22 per cent on the previous year

£260m
spending by Italian clubs in this summer's transfer window

£240m
spending by Spanish clubs in this summer's transfer window

28
goals in competitive international matches by Ruud Van Nistelrooy following the 5-0 win over San Marino – a new Holland record

1,639
increase in average attendances at Chelsea since Roman Abramovich bought the club in 2003

90
goals scored by Lionel Messi in La Liga for Barcelona, equalling Patrick Kluivert's haul

3
the number of times that Hercules have beaten Barcelona in their last three meetings in the Spanish top flight

REPORTS we couldn't make up

Accused...Italy's Angelo Di Livio doesn't see eye to eye with ref Moreno

REF DRUGS BUST

Byron Moreno, the Ecuadorian referee who became a hate figure in Italy following his controversial officiating of the 2002 World Cup match between South Korea and Italy, has been arrested after attempting to smuggle drugs into the USA.

Moreno, who sent off Francesco Totti for an alleged dive, disallowed an Italy goal and then awarded South Korea a penalty that decided the match, was caught with six kilos of heroin strapped to his body at New York's JFK airport.

Giovanni Trapattoni, Italy's coach at the time, was reported to have commented on hearing the news: "Now maybe my reign on Italy's bench will be read under a different light."

BYWATER'S WORK OF ART

Derby County goalkeeper Stephen Bywater has dismissed complaints from neighbours who protested at the art installation he has constructed in his garden in the English village of Sutton-on-the-Hill.

"It's a masterpiece," said Bywater of the artwork, which features an inflatable sex doll and a portable toilet.

Derby were reported to have "completely disassociated" themselves from Bywater's artistic efforts.

SHOOTING THE MESSENGER

In Honduras, a goalkeeper shot a reporter who criticised his performances.

Saul Carranza of sports daily *Diez* was interviewing Motagua midfielder Jorge Claros after training when keeper Donaldo Morale fired at them with an air rifle, hitting the reporter twice and the player once.

The paper said Morales later asked Carranza to forgive him but the reporter refused. Motagua president Pedro Atala was preparing to punish Morales.

YOUNG LIONS, OLD PROBLEM

Singaporean club Young Lions have apologised for the "unacceptable" on-pitch brawl which caused their S.League match with Beijing Guoan to be abandoned.

"As players, we understand that we must maintain our discipline and professionalism at all times," said Hariss Harun, captain of the club which doubles as the national side's under-23 team.

"We apologise to our fans,

Lions' skipper...Harun

coaches and technical staff for the incident. We know that such behaviour was unacceptable and we are regretful of our actions."

Singapore's FA launched an investigation after the match was called off 10 minutes before the end with the score at 1-1.

photo: Caters News Agency

Art attack...Derby keeper Bywater's "masterpiece"

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David Conn

Liverpool's decline shows nothing lasts forever

CONSIDERING the mire that Liverpool Football Club is in – now not denied or fudged by directors in close to open conflict with the owners, Tom Hicks and George Gillett – one striking thought suddenly occurs. And it is one which the club's supporters, who can seem at times excessively romantic about Bill Shankly and the glory years he ushered in, have reason greatly to fear.

The thought is how commonplace it is becoming to regard Liverpool as a club in decline. How not-particularly-shocking it is to equate Liverpool with crisis, owing £237million to banks, including, unforgivably, the £185m Hicks and Gillett borrowed to buy the club in the first place. How natural it is to look at Liverpool's unexceptional squad – Steven Gerrard and a creaking Fernando Torres excepted – and cast them as a middle-of-the-table side.

Perhaps the overriding moral of the club's sorry recent tale is that, in football, nothing is forever. It may be 20 years since Liverpool last won the league – that does seem a shocking fact – but they have mostly been up there in the top four throughout the last decade, apart from finishing fifth in 2003, then 2005 when they won the Champions League in Istanbul.

Yet all of a sudden last season's seventh place feels about right, and few right-minded souls expect Liverpool to claw back Spurs' elegant progress or the Abu Dhabi-funded power of Manchester City, who dispatched Liverpool 3-0 in this season's merciless early encounter.

It is the ease with which mediocrity can embrace a once-great club, and the difficulty in modern football of catching the clubs which begin to pull away, which have finally led Liverpool's awful three years under Hicks and Gillett to be recognised as a crisis.

Those supporters – who seemed too credulous back in February 2007 when Hicks and Gillett, with red scarves ostentatiously on, first trod all over the Anfield turf – now campaign tirelessly for them to sell up, be repossessed or in any other manner, leave.

Liverpool's three other directors – the chairman Martin Broughton (who was introduced solely to sell the club), managing director Christian Purslow and commercial director Ian Ayre – were, according to Purslow, united in their determination not to allow Hicks simply to refinance Liverpool's bank borrowings.

The implication of so forthright a statement by the club's managing director about its owner – still officially his employer – was that Purslow, Broughton and Ayre recognised Liverpool's urgent need to replace Hicks' debt-based presence with genuine investment and a credible plan. They wanted the Anfield politics not to be depicted as warfare between Hicks and Gillett and the other three. But a director publicly saying he would oppose refinancing proposals introduced by the club's owner is not the normal daily business of a happily functioning football club.

"All of a sudden, last season's finishing spot of seventh place for Liverpool feels about right"

On his own...Gerrard (left) is one of Liverpool's few remaining quality players

Another thought should always be borne in mind when considering how Liverpool's debts of £60m have now increased to £237m, how third place has been transformed into seventh, and the lack of progress on the new stadium: Hicks and Gillett's statements, and the PR in which they were wrapped, should be ingrained in all football supporters, all citizens, as an object lesson in not falling for guff.

Hicks and Gillett, it should be remembered, were welcomed in by fans who believed the smiling pair would restore at the club the trophy-winning greatness to which the Kop had become accustomed in the 1970s and 80s. Even though it was made clear in public documents when they took over that their money to do so – famously delivering £90m to the outgoing chairman, David Moores for his shareholding, was all borrowed, from Royal Bank of Scotland – the fans believed their pronouncements.

The pair promised they would not "do a Glazer", but they did, repeating the financial chicanery perpetrated by that Florida-based family on Manchester United, loading their own borrowings to take over the club onto the club to repay. They also promised that work would soon begin on the stadium in Stanley Park – the Shangri-La which Liverpool's board has held out for more than a decade as the more-bums-on-seats means of returning the club to greatness. No such work has begun, and the difficulty for Broughton of finding a buyer is that anybody taking Liverpool on must deal with £237m debts, a pay day to which Hicks appears to believe he is still entitled, and £450m to build the new stadium.

A choice phrase from Hicks and Gillett's initial promises to respect Liverpool's heritage was that they would be there long term and make a "multi-generational family commitment". Now the fans who cheered them in want them out as soon as possible, and all involved have many lessons to learn from a hideous phase in a great club's history. ●

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Paul Gardner

The case for counting corners

HERE IS A splendid quote from the FIFA Technical Report on the World Cup: "All steps should be taken, irrespective of chauvinistic and financial pressures, to foster the true spirit and best traditions of the game of Association Football."

Clearly, a call to action, a recommendation that something be done to counter what the report elsewhere calls "the present negative attitudes". Which would be highly encouraging...were it not for the fact that the quote is 44 years old. It is taken from the very first Technical Report, published after the 1966 World Cup.

What was then a modest little 80-page booklet produced by a six-man technical study group (TSG) now appears, in its 2010 edition, as a lavish 288-page coffee-table book, while the TSG has mushroomed to include 25 members. But the current report on the 2010 World Cup is a pathetic apology for a technical report, of little value other than as a statistical record of the 64 games.

Serious intentions

The 1966 report was suffused with serious intentions and warned that "teams were concerned about not taking risks, avoiding defeat...and packing players in defence when opponents are attacking" – all of which sound depressingly familiar.

The 2010 report simply mentions that "nearly all teams now play with a compact defence". Is this a positive or a negative development? Don't ask.

Surely, the central point of any analysis of the modern game should be the decrease in goalscoring. I don't know of anyone willing to claim that is a positive development. But the report simply states that "goals were few and far between" in the World Cup's first round, and passes on to other matters.

Back in 1990, the World Cup produced its lowest-ever goals per-game average of 2.21 goals. It got better in 1994 (2.71) but it has gone down at each successive World Cup since then and in South Africa this summer it was as low as 2.27.

Sepp Blatter's proposed solutions for the problem – more use of the penalty-kick tie-breaker, maybe the re-introduction of the golden goal – are patently absurd as they are guaranteed to make matters worse.

These are procedures that encourage caution. A team that fears defeat in the game will consider that it has a better chance of winning the tie-breaker, so why not play for that? The golden-goal rule has been tried and rejected, while the unfairness of penalty kicks – which simply obliterate 120 minutes of play and decide things in a five-minute lottery – is widely criticized. So, what else can we do?"

Attacking advantage...Germany's Bastian Schweinsteiger

"The point of any analysis of the modern game should be the decrease in goalscoring. No one is willing to claim that is a positive development"

Well, say some, we could use the shoot-out system once used in the USA, where the kicker dribbles the ball towards the goal from 35 yards out and has five seconds to score. This is purportedly closer to real-game action and is more exciting.

Possibly, but the arguments in its favour miss the point by a mile. The fatal flaw of penalty kicks, or the shoot-out, or indeed almost all tie-breakers, is not their format, but their timing. A tie-breaker which is tacked on to the end of a tied game will never induce teams to play the "free-flowing football".

Something different from an end-of-the-game gimmick is required. Juggling the points system is a possibility – awarding no points of a tie, or for a 0-0 tie has been suggested – but this would penalise teams that had been playing hard for a win, but could get no further than a draw.

A better solution is easily available: namely, the counting of corner kicks.

This is a tie-breaker that starts its influence at the beginning, not the end, of a game. Counting corner kicks will reward the attack-minded teams and penalise defensive play.

With the corners being counted – and displayed on the scoreboard – there could be no possibility of a team playing for a tie. Such tactics might reach half-time at 0-0, but almost certainly the team employing them would be on the wrong end of, say, a 4-1 corner kick count. The game, at that point, is lost – only an attacking second half can save it.

Counting corner kicks involves no rule changes, just a change of mentality. Maybe the football will not be as flowing as Blatter – and the rest of us – want, but it will be attacking football. I have suggested corner-kick counting to many people – coaches, players, fans, journalists – over the past couple of decades. I think I know all the anti-arguments by now and none of them is convincing.

Maybe the most common, almost knee-jerk, reaction is "then you'll get teams just playing for corner kicks." Maybe, but is that necessarily a bad thing? A team "playing for corner kicks" must be pushing forward and near the opponent's goal line. And anyway, gaining a corner kick is not

merely registering a stat – it is creating a set-piece scoring threat.

I've yet to meet anyone who has actually seen a team playing for corner kicks, so we don't really know what it would entail. What we do know is that if Team A is looking for corners, Team B is going to be equally determined to concede as few as possible. Giving away a corner kick as an easy option when in defensive trouble is no longer an attractive idea – nor is the goalkeeper's deflection over the bar. Either action could result in the fatal, losing, corner kick.

Admittedly, the current scoring rate from corners is not good – in South Africa, 627 corner kicks led directly to only 10 goals. One goal per 63 corners is not at all impressive, but elevating the importance of corners might just lead to a much needed improvement in the serving of such kicks.

More goals

With corner kicks as the tie-breaker, the ball is likely to be in play around the goalmouths more, which ought to mean more goals – which, in turn ought to mean less likelihood of a drawn game. Corner kicks could well be the ideal tie-breaker that works well enough to do itself out of a job.

Another objection to a corner-kick tie-breaker is that it would put too much pressure on referees to get the calls right – that it would introduce a whole new category of crucial ball-over-the-line incidents. It might, but this is a problem that already exists and for which a solution is being sought. Anyway, the additional goal-line assistants would play an important role.

The advantages of the corner-kick tie-breaker are:

(1) It involves no rule changes

(2) It is not a gimmicky add-on, but operates throughout a game as a regular part of the action

(3) It virtually rules out deliberately defensive play as a tactic

(4) It necessitates attacking play, and is therefore likely to increase goalscoring

No other tie-breaker comes close to that list of positive attributes and the last point is the key: in modern, defence-dominated football it is simply too difficult to score.

Until FIFA faces up to that situation and thinks about radical rule changes to reign in defences, the low-goal count will continue to encourage drawn games and the boredom of teams playing for a tie.

Corner-kick counting is an effective answer to that negativity. It deserves serious thought, and a serious trial. ●

HEROES...

Winner...McManus

STEPHEN McMANUS

The defender spared Scotland's blushes with the winning goal in the seventh minute of injury time at home to Liechtenstein.

MAINZ

The unheralded Rhineland were the early leaders of the Bundesliga at the start of only their second season in the German top flight.

Great start...Mainz

& VILLAINS

Red carded...Ujfalusi

Racist...Loko fans

LOKOMOTIV MOSCOW FANS

Fans of the Russian club were condemned as racist for displaying a banner following the transfer of Nigerian international Peter Odemwingie to West Brom.

TOMAS UJFALUSI

The Atletico Madrid defender was sent off for a vicious foul on Barcelona's Lionel Messi.

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13 STORIES YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT

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Houllier to Villa

Former Liverpool boss Gerard Houllier was eventually confirmed as the new manager of Aston Villa. More, page 110

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Bob Bradley was confirmed as USA national coach on a new four-year contract. More, page 24

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French revolution?

Laurent Blanc had an eventful start to his tenure in charge of the national side. More, page 20

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Bento replaces Queiroz

Paulo Bento was confirmed as the new national coach following the sacking of Carlos Queiroz. More, page 110

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Barcelona humbled by Hercules

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The last surviving player from the first ever World Cup Final dies, aged 100. More, page 112

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Zlatan Ibrahimovic returned to Italy, on loan from Barcelona to Milan, in the highest profile deal on transfer deadline day. More, page 18

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Euro 2012 surprise
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Zlatan Ibrahimovic

Swede returns to familiar foes in Serie A

ITALY

ZLATAN IS BACK in town. Never one for diplomatic niceties, Milan's Swedish striker reminded us all of how he can be when he snapped at former Milan coach Arrigo Sacchi during a live TV exchange on the night that Ibrahimovic scored both Milan goals in a 2-0 win over Auxerre.

Replying to a jocular observation about his boot size from studio guest Sacchi, Ibrahimovic said: "Sacchi seems jealous of everything I do. He talks too much. He should stop talking so much on TV and in the papers. If he wants something from me, he should come and speak to me about it..."

To which, Sacchi – the man who led Milan to two Champions Cup triumphs and one league title between 1987 and 1991 – replied somewhat curtly: "I think I am capable of expressing an opinion, correctly and with good manners, without offending people."

However, Ibrahimovic was not to be mollified, saying: "Look, when somebody talks too much, he talks too much – and you're one of them."

Sacchi, however, had the last word, saying: "Perhaps you should learn good manners".

Next day, writing in *Gazzetta dello Sport*, Sacchi underlined his point, suggesting that perhaps Ibra does not know just how highly he is regarded, and with what affection, by not only the Milan fans but also the owner, Italian prime minister Silvio Berlusconi. Sacchi added: "I would invite him to have more respect for expert opinions, especially those expressed by someone who has done a thing or two in football."

Milan have taken Ibrahimovic on loan from Barcelona for the season, with the option to buy for €24million next summer.

The deal represents a massive loss for Barcelona, who paid Internazionale around €70m (€50m plus Samuel Eto'o, who was valued at €20m) in the summer of 2009.

Paddy Agnew

In the news...Ibrahimovic scored twice against Auxerre before offending former Milan coach Sacchi

Under fire...Huntelaar must prove the doubters wrong

Klaas-Jan Huntelaar
Dutch striker with plenty to prove at Schalke

GERMANY

ALL THOSE WHO condescendingly claim goals are easy to come by in the Dutch top flight will be keeping a close eye on how Holland striker Klaas-Jan Huntelaar fares at his new German club, Schalke.

After five prolific campaigns in the Eredivisie for Heerenveen and Ajax, a period in which he amassed the most impressive total of 109 goals and was twice the league's top scorer (2005-06 and 2007-08), Huntelaar had his wish for overseas top billing granted when Real Madrid splashed out £20million for him in the January 2009 transfer window. Unfortunately, he never went beyond the role of bench-warmer in an unhappy six-month stint at the Bernabeu and fared no better last term at Milan.

In the past few years, many top Eredivisie marksmen have found finishing to be much more problematic on switching to the big leagues. Dirk Kuyt at Liverpool, Afonso Alves with Middlesbrough and Mateja Kezman at Chelsea all saw their strike rates wither, and the naysayers are claiming that Huntelaar belongs in the same flat-track-bully category: ruthless against the weak, hesitant when defences know what they are doing.

Schalke boss Felix Magath, however, has another take on the matter. Desperately requiring a new goal machine following the departure this summer of leading scorer Kevin Kuranyi to Dynamo Moscow, Magath spent the close season looking high and low for a replacement before eventually identifying the 27-year-old Dutchman, paying Milan a Schalke record £12.7 million.

"Anyone who wants to put the emphasis on Huntelaar's misfortunes at Real and Milan, should look at the big picture," argues Magath. "Form is temporary, class is permanent. I look at him as a natural penalty-area operator, someone who can sniff out chances and put them away with a minimum of fuss.

"I don't believe he's lost the qualities which made him so dangerous for Ajax. Look at his international record [21 goals in 38 games]. It speaks for itself. I've heard Louis Van Gaal describe him as one of the best finishers in circulation. That's good enough for me.

"He just needs to settle down again. Changing clubs is not a straightforward process, but I'm convinced we can bring the best out of him. He will score goals for us. Of this I'm sure.

"He's been unlucky. He joined Real mid-season, which is always awkward and as they had too many foreign players, he was squeezed out of their Champions League squad.

"At Milan he wasn't used in his best position. He's no right-sided attacker. This is a man to apply the finishing touch in the box."

Huntelaar certainly has a lot on his plate. Not only must he rebuild his club career, he has do it in a team in a state of total flux. With 15 new players and as many heading for the exit, Schalke resembles a building site at the moment and it was no surprise at all when an almost entirely remodelled line-up began the 2010-11 campaign with four straight losses.

"We're a new team to a large extent and it will take time for us to gel, but I'm convinced we're now moving in the right direction." says Huntelaar, whose last-minute winner at Freiburg brought the Gelsenkirchen outfit their first three points of the season. "It's a case of getting up and running, building up confidence and understanding.

"I just want to play. At Real Madrid and Milan I was the fifth wheel. Schalke are one of the biggest clubs in Germany and the important part is that Felix Magath intends to put me to work.

"I think I'm in good nick at the moment. I've just scored five in two games for Holland and I'm certain Raul and I will develop a good partnership for Schalke. We compliment one another."

Nick Bidwell

Happier days...Benzema's performance against Bosnia is a big boost for coach Blanc

Laurent Blanc
Helping *Les Bleus* move on

FRANCE

THE PROCESS of reconstruction – and dare we mention reconciliation? – has begun. After the disaster/farce that was Raymond Domenech's World Cup campaign this summer, incoming France coach Laurent Blanc has been hard at work attempting to restore some pride in the blue shirt.

His is not an easy task, given the cataclysmic implosion of the group in South Africa, the universally negative view of the French public over the players' decision to strike at that time and the subsequent disciplinary commission of the French Football Federation that handed down bans to supposed mutiny ringleaders Nicolas Anelka (18 games), Patrice Evra (five), Franck Ribery (three) and Jeremy Toulalan (one). Anelka won't be available for selection until Euro 2012, but in reality his international career is finished.

Yet while the whole sorry affair was a disaster for French football, perhaps it will be a blessing in disguise for Blanc – and a chance to move on, disband a group that has lived on past glories for too long and build a team in his own image.

After the symbolic gesture of refusing to select any of the 23-man World Cup squad for his first game – a 2-1 friendly defeat against Norway in August – the former Bordeaux boss got down to the serious business of Euro 2012 qualification matches with a home game against Belarus and a trip to Bosnia-Herzegovina.

In front of a packed Stade de France, things got off to a bad start when the visitors, ranked 78th in the world, picked French pockets with a goal four minutes from time to seal an unexpected 1-0 win.

In Blanc's defence the team he picked was lacking critical experience at international level. New skipper Florent Malouda may have been winning his 57th cap, but only three others in the starting line-up – Hugo Lloris, Bacary Sagna and Philippe Mexes – could boast more than 10 caps.

The coach was more than aware of the weaknesses in his group, saying he was "building rather than rebuilding a team", while bemoaning the lack of "leaders and big-name players". But the sense in France appeared to be conciliatory and patient, despite the disappointment of a losing start and the lack of a French goal.

Four days later, in Sarajevo, Blanc got the first reward for his managerial efforts. Making three changes from the side that lost to Belarus – Jeremy Menez, Guillaume Hoarau and the injured Loic Remy making way for Lassana Diarra, Mathieu Valbuena and the fit-again Karim Benzema – the French turned in a vastly improved performance to come away with an impressive 2-0 victory.

Second-half goals from Benzema and Malouda secured the points, but it was Blanc's decision to set up his side with three midfield enforcers and a more defensive attitude than against Belarus that was most crucial to the victory. Alou Diarra, Abou Diaby and Yann Mvila are three big, strong units who operate on a motto of "they shall not pass". Together they really ran the show.

Blanc's new-look side was pragmatic and fit for purpose, playing on the break and executing a game plan to perfection against a dangerous opponent. In short, they turned in the kind of performance not seen from France since the 1-0 win against Ireland in the first leg of the World Cup qualification play-off in November last year.

Another huge plus for Blanc was the performance of Benzema, the Real Madrid striker who hasn't had the best of times since leaving Lyon for Spain in June 2009. Having had what turned out to be the good fortune not to be selected for South Africa, he looked like his old self in Sarajevo, working hard for the team, never letting his head drop after missing a chance or two before finally producing a wonderful drag-back to create space and open the scoring on 72 minutes. His was a performance worthy of the hype that surrounded the 22-year-old when he first burst on the scene.

With Yoann Gourcuff back from suspension and Samir Nasri returning from injury for the game against Romania on October 9, there's no doubt France will go into the game in better spirits than at any other time in 2010. Blanc isn't the type to let one good result go to his head and he has already said "there are lots of things we need to look at and work on". But perhaps the nightmare of South Africa is finally beginning to recede and France can now look to a brighter footballing future.

Howard Johnson

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Mbark Boussoufa
Potential is no longer enough

BELGIUM

A HORROR MISS, albeit on an admittedly poor surface, cost Anderlecht dear in the final preliminaries before this season's Champions League group phase and again thrust the precocious talent of key midfielder Mbark Boussoufa into focus.

The Holland-born Morocco international has long been hailed as an authentic talent but, after five seasons in the less competitive confines of the Belgian league, his potential has reached a critical stage.

Boussoufa skied his spot kick wildly over the crossbar as Anderlecht contrived to lose at home to Partizan Belgrade in their last knockout-round match, a defeat made worse by the fact that they had come away from the first leg in Serbia in an advantageous position.

Boussoufa's extraordinarily poor penalty attempt sees the focus again fall on whether he will ever be able to live up to the predictions of greatness that have been thrust upon him, or whether he will fade, having not played in forums like the Champions League where genuine world stars are made.

Failure at club level for the 26-year-old playmaker was followed 10 days later by another potentially disastrous result for Morocco, with Boussoufa in the side, at the start of their 2012 African Nations Cup qualifying campaign. The 0-0 draw at home to the Central African Republic revives the spectre of Morocco's last unsuccessful campaign where they finished last in their qualifying group for the 2010 World Cup and African Nations Cup finals.

It can be suggested that Anderlecht – twice European Cup-winners Cup winners in the past – and Morocco, who have been to four World Cup finals, both look fading forces, leaving Boussoufa at a crossroads.

He has been bemoaning the intense spotlight on his seemingly unfulfilled talent since the Champions League setback while seeking to set the disappointment behind him.

"It is not true," he said in response to reporters' questions about a growing reputation as a player who fails to "turn up" for the really important ties. "Look, if we win then there is overall analysis of how every one in the team did, including me. But when Anderlecht lose or get knocked out, they are all looking at Boussoufa.

"That is enormous pressure. It is not nice to play football like that and I am really tired of it now."

Boussoufa says he has put the penalty miss behind him but feels miserable over the hefty cost to his club and team-mates, adding: "I felt really guilty when I missed the kick but that is over now. It was not nice in the days thereafter because everyone expected us to go through.

"We should never have been forced to penalties. And for me it was a real drama because I had to take the decisive kick. And then I sank in the turf. But poor pitch or not, I missed it."

Boussoufa says he feels he has had much success at Anderlecht and had planned to stay the season, even if there were some tempting offers to go elsewhere. Now, though, the pressure and the sniping is leading to thoughts of a move away from Brussels and he admits: "If it doesn't get better maybe it would be a good idea to move away in the next transfer window."

Mark Gleeson

On the spot...Boussoufa misses the crucial penalty against Partizan Belgrade

Unstoppable...Valdez (left) holds off Barcelona's Adriano during Hercules' victory at Camp Nou

Nelson Haedo Valdez
Paraguayan striker stuns Barcelona

SPAIN

"RAGS TO RICHES" might just be the most devalued of set phrases. And "dream debut" is not that far behind. But sometimes, every now and then, they are entirely appropriate – and this was one of those times.

It was the second week of the new Spanish season and Hercules travelled to Camp Nou to face Barcelona; the league champions versus the newly promoted side from Alicante – a team that had not played in the top flight for 13 years. Barca had not been beaten at home in 16 months and won 18 out of 19 Camp Nou matches last season, while Hercules had begun their return to La Liga with an opening-day defeat.

Hercules coach Esteban Vigo reckoned his side would win 2-0; everyone else reckoned he was completely mad. The only doubt was how many goals Barcelona would win by.

But, incredibly, Vigo was right. Hercules beat Barcelona 2-0 with two goals from summer signing Valdez, who was making his debut. If it wasn't a dream debut, that was only because even the Paraguay striker's dreams are not this wild. He might be Hercules' most expensive signing ever at £3.2million, but goals have rarely been his thing – he was signed from Borussia Dortmund, where he scored 16 in 113 league games.

Now he has got two in a single game: the first a nudge over the line after a free-kick dropped in the Barcelona area, the second a perfectly placed shot, curling away from Victor Valdes' outstretched hand and into the top corner. It was the biggest shock anyone could remember for years. Suddenly, Valdez was on the cover of every paper in Spain. "Valdezazo!" shouted the sports daily *AS*. He had become an instant hero.

Perhaps not so instant. Valdez has come a long way. Rags to riches? That's not the half of it.

Nine years ago, Valdez was homeless. He slept rough as he sought to build himself a football career and fulfil a promise to his mother. As Valdez tells it, when Paraguay were knocked out of the 1998 World Cup by France, his mother burst into tears and the only way he could think to console her was to make a promise that he would score at the World Cup himself one day to make it up to her. (When he did, against Spain this summer, the goal was disallowed.)

Valdez moved to the town of Ypane, just outside Asuncion, as a 15-year-old to play for the local side Atletico Tembetary. His wage was so low that he could not afford accommodation so, along with four or five other apprentices, he slept under the concrete stands of the club's stadium.

Within a month the rest had gone, but Valdez stuck it out for two years.

He describes the experience "frightening" and "horrible". He admits to drinking so much cane liquor that he felt himself verging on alcoholism. But he never told his proud parents and just kept on training and kept on sleeping rough.

One day, a businessman with Deustche Bank in Latin America, who had seen him play for Atletico Tembetary's youth side, offered him the chance to travel to Germany and have a trial with Werder Bremen...even though he hadn't told Bremen yet.

In the end, he persuaded Bremen – whose president, Jurgen Born, was married to a Paraguayan woman – to give the kid a chance. The businessman had been struck by what he described as "a madman that never stopped running"; soon the German club would be too.

Valdez would be eternally grateful to Born. And now so are Hercules.

Sid Lowe

Raddy Antic
National coach sacked after too many run-ins with FA

SERBIA

MORE THAN half of the national coaches in charge at the 2010 World Cup were fired or resigned after the tournament in South Africa, but it seems that the story of Radomir Antic's sacking is a special one.

While it is fair to describe Serbia's World Cup campaign as a failure – they finished bottom of their group behind Germany, Ghana and Australia – things could easily have been so very different.

The defeats to Ghana and Australia were painful, but it is easy to forget that Serbia managed to beat Germany and that in the end only one goal and one refereeing decision sealed their destiny.

Had Zdravko Kuzmanovic not needlessly handled the ball against Ghana, conceding a penalty which was converted for a 1-0 victory, the match would have ended 0-0 and Serbia would have been in the second round.

Against Australia, referee Jorge Larrionda, the same man who failed to see Frank Lampard's "goal" in the England-Germany match, did not sanction Tim Cahill's handball late in the game – and although the offence didn't look deliberate, such penalties have been given. If this one had, Serbia would have probably levelled the score at 2-2 and reached the knockout phase.

Furthermore, it seems odd how quickly people have forgotten that Serbia, guided by Antic, played some good football in the 2010 qualifying campaign, scoring 22 goals and finishing as group winners ahead of France.

The people who sacked Antic also apparently forgot that the "Belgrade Marakana" was packed three times in a row for the home qualifiers against Austria, France and Romania. Not so long ago, fans didn't care about the national team and the stadium was half empty.

However, the Serbian FA considered a string of poor results, including the recent 1-1 draw at home to Slovenia in the Euro 2012 qualifiers, enough basis to dismiss a coach who managed to give new hope to Serbian football. Antic's lucrative contract, which ran until the end of 2011, was worth £1million per year and his controversial sacking has turned Serbian fans against FA chairman Tomislav Karadzic.

Of course it didn't help Antic's cause that FIFA punished him with a four-match-ban for his behaviour after the Australia game, when he verbally attacked the referee. The FA argued "we need a coach on the bench and not on the stands" and after the 1-0 home defeat to Greece in a mid-August friendly, Karadzic announced that "there must be a change".

The FA and Antic allegedly agreed to a 50 per cent reduction in his salary, but it was decided he would keep his job.

Yet three weeks later, after the draw with Slovenia, and after a hefty local media campaign against Antic, the FA performed a U-turn and sacked him. The same media had previously hailed Antic as a hero, but they had been heavily influenced by Karadzic.

In comes Vladimir Petrovic, the former Red Star midfielder who guided Serbia & Montenegro Under-21s to second-place at the 2004 European Championship finals.

Petrovic, who has also coached Kuwait Under-23s and China, is Serbia's fourth national coach – after Javier Clemente, Miroslav Dukic and Antic – since August 2006.

"We are aware it's a bad time to change the coach during the qualifications, but we have to take the chance," explains Karadzic.

Failure at the World Cup, his four-match-ban and the draw against Slovenia were cited as the reasons for sacking Antic, but the real cause was the bad relationship between the coach and his FA bosses. In the past three months, Antic had been at loggerheads with the FA, but relations had been frosty since a contract extension was agreed at the end of 2009.

"From the first day my wish was that changes were made in the FA, that the personnel be modernised in order to improve Serbian football. This was apparently my biggest sin, because the status quo suited them," Antic claimed the day after he was fired.

In the FA's defence, Antic's habit of referring to himself in the third person at press conferences was irritating. Above all, his lack of readiness to accept criticism after the World Cup failure also grated.

In a nutshell, Antic was probably too big for the Serbian FA, just like the World Cup was maybe too big for Antic and his team. When the FA agreed to play a friendly game in Japan, in April this year, Antic refused to coach the team from the bench because it was not his team but a League XI – the fixture having been scheduled outside the FIFA match calendar. Such a move would have been unthinkable for national coaches in the past, but Antic was his own man.

Vladimir Novak

Dismissed...Antic has been sacked by Serbia

Thank you...Bradley has often had to rely on Donovan to save the USA

Bob Bradley
Four more years for national coach

UNITED STATES

MORE OF THE SAME is what the US team is getting on the coaching front, with Bob Bradley reappointed to take the team into the 2014 World Cup and United States Soccer Federation president Sunil Gulati praising him for doing "a great job" over the past four years.

Even so, there was no hurry to make the appointment, which did not come until six weeks after the end of this summer's World Cup. Gulati admitted that the history of coaches who had been retained for a second finals was not particularly good – over 50 per cent do worse second time around – but he believed that Bradley should be given the opportunity to build on what he had so far achieved, and that the reappointment would bring the benefits of stability.

Bradley's record in charge of the national team has been neither outstandingly good or depressingly bad; his overall stats of 38 wins, 20 draws and eight defeats were achieved mainly in friendlies or against weak CONCACAF opponents. The highlight was the team's outstanding performance in the 2009 Confederations Cup, where they reached the Final and took a 2-0 lead over Brazil before going down 3-2.

The first priority for Bradley is to win next year's Gold Cup – victory in that tournament offers admission to the 2013 Confederations Cup. Considering that the Gold Cup is played in the US, Bradley's side ought to be favourites, though Mexico are a threat. Should the USA fail to win, Bradley's reign might well come to an early end.

The essence of Bradley's teams has always been the solidity of no-frills football. Many doubt that a continuation of that approach can allow the USA to make any progress for it is a style of play that relies on workhorse players and finds little room for the creative types. The one exception is Landon Donovan, the one truly outstanding player the USA has, who has saved the team – and Bradley – on more than one occasion (as he did in South Africa with crucial goals against Slovenia and Algeria).

In short, the United States' national side needs new players and a more adventurous style. Bradley has spoken of "reinventing" the team, of giving it new energy.

However, it remains to be seen if Bradley – who has never been a risk-taking coach – can transform those admirable words into action on the pitch.

Paul Gardner

Lothar Matthaus
New job for ex-Germany skipper

BULGARIA

THE globe-trotting coaching career of Lothar Matthaus continues after the former Germany captain was put in charge of Bulgaria's national team with a brief to rescue their already ailing Euro 2012 qualifying campaign.

Defeats against England and Montenegro prompted the departure of previous boss Stanimir Stoilov and the call to Matthaus, whose last job was in charge of Israeli club Maccabi Netanya.

Since his retirement as a player, Matthaus – who is Germany's most-capped international with 150 caps, has enjoyed mixed success as a coach. He departed Maccabi Netanya at the end of the 2008-09 season, with the club in fourth place, having previously had spells at Partizan Belgrade, Hungary's national side and Salzburg. Results with Hungary were at best patchy and his spell in Budapest was followed by a six-week sojourn at Brazilian side Atletico Paranaense.

"It won't be easy at all after Bulgaria's losses to England and Montenegro, but this is the great challenge for me," Matthaus said of his new challenge.

Much will depend on his plan to lure Manchester United striker Dimitar Berbatov back to the national team after he quit international football earlier this year.

"He is still welcome in the Bulgarian national team," added the 49-year-old. "As a Bulgarian player he should be proud to play for his country."

John Holmesdale.

Good luck...Bulgarian FA president Borislav Mihaylov (left) welcomes the new national coach

Rohan Ricketts
Cult online following for former Arsenal trainee

MOLDOVA

Blog...Ricketts reveals the secret life of a professional footballer

THE career of Rohan Ricketts has taken many turns. The former Arsenal trainee, who is one of only a handful of players to have crossed north London to join arch-rivals Tottenham, is now in Moldova with Dacia Chisinau.

But Ricketts seems likely to be remembered more for his off-the-pitch activities than anything he does on it.

In an era when professional footballers are encouraged to treat any dealings with the media with suspicion, Ricketts has gained a cult following for his blogging online and his "Secret Diary of a Footballer" on the Sabotage Times website has provided an unusual but welcome insight into the world of the modern professional.

Take this honest appraisal of the transfer window. "Just imagine going into training this week not knowing if the manager is trying to flog you behind your back," he wrote last month. "But when you get home after training you turn on Sky Sports News to see some random broadcaster who you have never met, telling the world where your future may lie in the coming weeks. Total madness!

"But hey, they said it's the best job in the world, so you just keep your chin high and keep rolling."

Out of favour at Spurs under acting boss David Pleat, Ricketts also recalled how his agent had set up a loan deal with Reading, only to find the deal blocked by Pleat.

"He had told me to call him if we found a club," blogged Ricketts. "So I gave him a call. And you would not believe what this man said to me. He asked me why was I calling him, so I told him about the Reading interest. He then says: 'You ain't going anywhere and how did you get my number?', like he was the damn Queen or something.

"I said: 'David you told me to find a club and now I've found one.' He then says again that I ain't going nowhere and proceeds to hang up the phone. Cheek!"

More from Ricketts at www.sabotagetimes.com/football-sport/the-secret-diary-of-a-footballer

John Holmesdale.

Keir Radnedge

Blatter's ever changing moods

FIFA president's change of heart should be welcomed

NOW IT MUST be right. All of those who came away from the privilege of attending the World Cup finals scratching their heads and wondering what happened to the football, have the delightful reassurance of knowing that our fears were well-founded.

How do I know this? Because even Sepp Blatter has revealed himself to be on the side of the angels.

Next year Blatter will stand for re-election and a fourth term in office as president of FIFA. He says his mission remains incomplete. I suspect he sees his mission in terms of football for the greater good, turning the world a warmingly reversed deep green, spreading joy and health and education across the globe.

Here, I have to say, I remain a minimalist. Not that I object to the grand concepts of world peace and universal healthcare. Count me among the first chorus of supporters.

However, whether football officials should embark upon such projects through the sport's restrictive channel is a discussion for another day.

The United Nations may be far from perfect but it has marked out its own pitch.

Further, whether football dare tell the world how to live its life is an open question. First it should put its own house in order and that, surely, and with apologies for appearing parochial, starts with, well, football.

Now Blatter is also, belatedly, on board. So far, so good. The next issue is coming up with solutions which make long-term sense rather than generate short-term headlines with proposals which drive a coach and horses through his own original doctrine of the "universality" of football.

"We are considering doing away with draws in the first round [of the World Cup]"

Blatter had always insisted on the need for football matches to be similarly regulated, from World Cup to pub leagues. This was a key reason for his refusal to concede ground for so long on the potential of goal-line technology at senior level – until zillions around the world laughed at football's incompetence as exposed by Frank Lampard.

Now Blatter himself appears to be on the slippery slope of sectionalised change by suggesting scrapping draws in the World Cup.

First floating the idea in an interview with a German magazine, and then in an authorised interview, Blatter said: "We are considering doing away with draws in the first round... and also ending extra-time play. If there is no winner at the end of 90 minutes of play, we could proceed directly to penalty kicks."

He also suggested that FIFA might revive the golden-goal system by which a match ended after the first goal in extra time. The system was last used at the World Cup in Japan and South Korea in 2002. UEFA experimented, to much derision, with a silver-goal system at Euro 2004, where teams played a further 15 minutes if scores were level at the end of 90 minutes, followed by a second period of 15 minutes only if the scores were still level.

Incautious thoughts

FIFA presidents have a long record for throwing out incautious thoughts to prompt debate. Blatter's predecessor, Joao Havelange, was the man who originally talked about the possibilities of splitting a game into four quarters rather than two halves. At the time, Havelange was seeking a way to make the game more palatable to a United States audience and, more important, to TV advertisers.

Other possibilities have included enlarging the size of the goals (in line with general increases in health and stature since the original laws of the game were created in the mid-19th century) and reducing teams to 10 players each or even removing a player every few minutes during extra time.

Blatter, ahead of the South African World Cup, once talked about having a Plan B, just in case of *force majeure*. Later he insisted he put Plan B in a safe and lost the key. Hopefully his latest ideas will also find their way into the vault of no return.

But not the need for change... ●

Historic relic...Turkey's Ilhan Mansiz scored the last World Cup "golden goal", against Senegal in 2002

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Read more from Keir Radnedge at worldsoccer.com

Window sorts continental wheat from English chaff

TWICE a year, plenty of managers go on record to express their distaste for the transfer window. Plenty of British managers in English football, that is.

They still hark back to the happy, carefree, pre-Bosman days when – apart from the last six weeks of term – they recall being able to strengthen their side, effect emergency injury cover, whenever they wished.

Or did they? In truth, it was not quite as simple.

Firstly, managers – then as now – spent money only when their club approved it. Secondly, managers of vulnerable clubs were at the mercy of richer outfits coming in for their best players at potentially crucial moments and damaging promotion bids or relegation struggles.

The value of a transfer market which was open all season was never questioned. Only after FIFA and the European Commission hammered out a deal on transfers and contracts did English managers find themselves restricted by transfer windows.

Scot success...Alex Ferguson has won the Champions League

But in Europe, Italy was already only permitting in-season transfers over a brief 10 days in late autumn, while Spain conceded just a mid-season promotion of youngsters from a club's nursery team.

Years ago I asked Aime Jacquet, France's 1998 World Cup-winning manager about the value of transfer restrictions. He appeared surprised that any doubt should exist, explaining: "This is all about the health of the practice of our sport. Clubs must plan properly for the year ahead; construct a squad which can cope with good results and bad results, injuries, losses of form.

"It means the coach is not a transfer manager, he really is a coach. He has a squad for a year ahead and he must work with those same players to educate them, guide them, instruct them.

"This is what coaching means. This is no easy job for a retired player. This is a sports vocation all its own."

Ergo, the transfer window should help sort out the "real" coaches from mere exponents of the name game.

German football has long insisted on the significance of coaching qualifications.

When Franz Beckenbauer was appointed national manager in 1984 he was formally termed "team chief" because he lacked the paperwork. Jurgen Klinsmann, between 2004 and 2006, was proud of being "national trainer" because he had passed all his exams – and it was during his study course that he first met Joachim Low.

Maybe the continental coaching culture explains why it is that no Englishman has managed to win the Champions League in the transfer-window era...

UEFA rich beyond its wildest dreams

SEVEN HUNDRED and forty six million euros. Read it over again, slowly. Seven. Hundred (and). Forty six. That was just – repeat, just – the total prize money which the 32 clubs in last season's Champions League groups earned between them.

Not, you understand, the total revenue generated by UEFA from those exclusive television and sponsorship contracts which have seen the world game's top club competition continue to defy all the recessionary rules.

No wonder Tottenham Hotspur were so desperate to ensure that London made history as the first city with three clubs in the group stage (along with perennials Chelsea and Arsenal).

Champions League presence can lift a club into a totally different sphere. For example, if Spurs fail to progress beyond the group stage they can still look at a slice of the cake worth around €30m. That is the tidy little sum Liverpool collected last season when they finished their group and dropped into the Europa League.

This is the rich men's club indeed and it takes a sad string of managerial failings to fall by the wayside. The self-perpetuating ideal is that such money is reinvested in buying the best local talent to keep one's own team strong while keeping the opposition weak.

UEFA president Michel Platini has created a flood of headlines with his proposals to launch an era of "financial fairplay" within the European club world, but the riches on offer in his flagship competition encourage directors to gamble cash they do not have in trying to "live the dream".

The irony can be read at the top of last season's earnings list comprising Inter (€48m), Manchester United (€45m), Bayern Munich (€44m) and Barcelona (€39m). Bayern Munich are the only one of the three not in debt to significant levels – and that owes everything not only to sensible management but to the controls imposed by the German football/finance model.

UEFA thus has access to riches beyond compare. It is far more secure, for example, than FIFA. The world federation topped $1bn revenue last year for the first time and took away $3bn gross income from the World Cup finals in South Africa.

Big time...Spurs (in white) in Champions League action

However, the World Cup, which is FIFA's only source of profitable revenue, comes around only once ever four years; the Champions League is always with us.

Also (whisper it in Zurich!) the quality of the football is better.

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Read more from Keir Radnedge at worldsoccer.com

December 2: D-Day in Zurich

Bidders prepare to discover who will host the 2018 and 2022 World Cups

AS the street lights flare up in Zurich in the late afternoon of December 2 so a conclusive blackout will descend on the dreams and ambitions of football supporters of the nine bids hoping to host the World Cups of 2018 and 2022.

FIFA's 24-strong executive committee, headed by president Sepp Blatter, will have negotiated a complex route through the technical reports and the underlying politics, will have heard the presentations from the 11 countries all over again... and will have cast their votes.

Do they back tradition or innovation, economic security or financial unknown, old world or new? More, should they balance all of those issues through a conspired cascade in which their votes fall for Europe in 2018 and for the rest in 2022?

England, Holland/Belgium, Russia and Spain/Portugal pursue the first option; the second is disputed territory for the United States, Australia, Japan, South Korea and – most intriguing of all – Qatar, supported by Zinedine Zidane.

When FIFA's six-strong inspection team was presented with the concluding presentation of its visit to the tiny Gulf state the film – featuring Zidane – concluded with his appearance in person.

Of course, whether his charisma will sway any minds is another issue entirely. The same applies, for that matter, to the technical report itself. This may be good news for the Qataris since they – like Russians and Americans – have attracted a gentle hint of concern.

All the bids, according to the globally scattered conclusions of inspection leader Harold Mayne-Nicholls, have hosting potential. But the Russians would need to work around the clock, the US need to provide evidence of a little more international outreach and Qatar might just be too small.

Running against the gigantism trend afflicting major sports movements, Qatar – with a population of 1.5 million – would be the smallest nation ever to host the finals, smaller in size and population than Uruguay in 1930.

But 2022 will be vastly different from 1930. The Qataris know they have to convince FIFA that they can build the infrastructure. They are refining the technology to ensure cool-temperature stadia and training grounds, and can dismiss "white elephant" fears with stadia which can be dismantled and shipped off to the developing world.

Also, they hope it may just tickle the fancy of Blatter and Co – in the cutting-edge competition with the Olympic movement – to bring the World Cup to the Middle East for the first time.

Do we gather anything from Mohamed Bin Hammam's declaration of non-interest in next year's FIFA presidential election? Surely not.

Of course he is Qatari but then, as president of the Asian confederation, he must remain strictly neutral.

Sign him up...Zidane joins the Qatari bid team

Ever the rebel..former France star Eric Cantona

French rebellion as old as the Revolution

THE spirit of revolution has a special place in the French psyche. Millions of theatre-goers celebrate it every time they attend a performance of *Les Miserables*. Maybe a present day Victor Hugo is lurking out there to chart the escapades of Nicolas Anelka and Co in South Africa.

The episode sparked by half-time events in Polokwane will not go away. Po-faced French federation bosses held an inquiry – summoning the perceived ringleaders like naughty schoolboys – and then delivered suspensions varying from one match to 18 (for an Anelka whose retirement had put him beyond their jurisdiction anyway).

In fact, French footballers have a long and proud history of not putting up meekly with federation diktats.

Back in September 1963, Rennes midfielder Marcel Loncle was suspended for a fortnight after refusing a call-up for a Nations Cup qualifier. That was his reaction at having been dropped, a year earlier. Loncle felt that, if France had the right to drop him, then it must work both ways and he had the right to drop France.

Eric Cantona, by contrast, got into trouble after being left out. Famously or infamously, he was banned for 10 months in 1988 for insulting national coach Henri Michel after being omitted ahead of a game against Czechoslovakia.

Thus Anelka, Patrice Evra, Franck Ribery and Jeremy Toulalan were merely following in an honourable tradition, stretching all the way back – even beyond the *Les Miz* days – to 1789 and the start of the original French Revolution.

Perhaps, instead, the real guilty men were those French federation directors who kept World Cup coach Raymond Domenech in his job long after he had clearly passed his sell-by date.

World Soccer®

To celebrate 50 years of *World Soccer*, 50 living legends offer up their thoughts on the game's past half-century

Egon LOY

Eintracht Frankfurt

The goalkeeper who was on the receiving end of Real Madrid's seven-goal blitz in arguably the greatest European Cup Final of all

WHAT ARE YOUR memories of Eintracht Frankfurt's 7-3 defeat in the European Cup Final at Hampden Park in May 1960?
It was the biggest game of my life and in the history of the club. We flew to Glasgow three days before the game so we could train properly together. Naturally, we had no idea at that time how big the game would become and the importance it would come to be given. In those days we didn't have so many matches in the European Cup because only the champions of each country took part.

There was no TV coverage as there is today, so how much did you know about Real Madrid before you played them?
Matches were not co-ordinated on the same day as they are now, so after we beat Rangers in the semi-finals our manager, Paul Osswald, and our two senior players, Alfred Pfaff and Richard Kress, went to see the second leg of Real Madrid's semi-final against Barcelona. Then we had a meeting and we talked about their players, but I think we knew from the beginning that we had no chance. They were full-time professionals with much better fitness; we were amateurs and part-timers and were tired after the two games against Rangers.

What was your day job?
I worked in a bank. I would finish at four o'clock and we would all go to the sports school and have a cup of coffee and a piece of cake before going to the stadium for training.

Yet Eintracht scored first in the Final after 18 minutes. What thoughts ran through your mind then?
Kress scored and I just wanted the game to stop then and there and the referee to blow the final whistle. But of course we had been going only a few minutes and losing the first goal just made Madrid play better. It was very disappointing for our fans and families to watch, especially for my wife who came to the game, because of course I was the goalkeeper and Madrid scored seven goals against me. But they were the best team in the world and were playing at their best. They were very proud of what they had achieved. At the banquet after the match they ignored us. As I say, they knew what they were; they were the best in the world with Di Stefano, Puskas, Santamaria and so on.

Saving grace...Loy thwarts Luis Del Sol in the 1960 European Cup Final at Hampden Park

> **When Kress scored I just wanted the game to stop then and there**

How much were you paid?
That's funny now. We had an argument with the club. They told us they would pay each of us 1,500 Marks but we complained so in the end they paid us 3,000 each [£300].

What was the reaction later?
Afterwards we were proud to have played in the game and our club were invited to play friendly games around the world. Eintracht Frankfurt had never been so famous. Last May, Real Madrid invited us to the Champions League Final. Those of us who are still here and could go enjoyed it. We were there for three days and, of course, we met up with our old opponents from 50 years ago. It was good.

How long did you continue playing?
I retired at the end of the 1966-67 season after 13 years with Eintracht. I trained some amateurs from a club near Frankfurt for two years but never professionals. I just carried on with my career in banking until I retired in 1994. We still live near Frankfurt and I never miss a game.

How would you define the main difference between football then and now?
The game was slower; today it is much, much faster. Also, today's teams use many different tactics. In my day every team used the "WM" formation. But the game back then was also more open, much more entertaining, there was far more attacking football. People like to see plenty of goals.

Keir Radnedge

● 1960

There was arguably no better time for *World Soccer*'s October launch. Real Madrid, who dominated football and had won every European Cup since its inauguration in 1956, were acclaimed by Eric Batty in the first-ever issue as "the greatest team in the world".

A worthy title as, just a few months earlier, they had demolished Eintracht Frankfurt 7-3.

The December edition carried a profile of Tottenham Hotspur and Northern Ireland captain Danny Blanchflower. Jack Rollin wrote: "Of the more experienced players in the British Isles, Blanchflower is perhaps the most famous. He is an outstanding personality and a brilliant and intelligent player... not only one of the leading lights behind the Tottenham revival, but also a witty, informative and highly entertaining authority on the game.

"As you might expect from someone from the Emerald Isle, he has kissed the Blarney Stone with a vengeance."

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Mario ZAGALLO

Flamengo, Botafogo & Brazil
The first man to win the World Cup as both player and coach

ARE YOU HAPPY that you played in your era and not today?
No doubt about it. In my era football was art, we had a lot of space to play. It was beautiful to watch and beautiful to be part of on the pitch. Nowadays, there is no space to play, everyone wants to destroy more than to create chances to score goals. I'm not saying that there are no good games nowadays, but the physical aspect is more important than the skill and that has made the game uglier.

Are players today paid too much?
It's always hard to draw comparisons between wages in two different eras, but I can say it is absurd what players are paid now compared to what we used to earn. Nowadays there are a few players who receive in one year what all the players in my era received during the whole of their careers. Football is too expensive today and by that I mean the amounts paid to coaches and players – in fact, the cost of everything around the game. But we should also note that only a small percentage of those involved are responsible for that, because if you look at a lot of countries, and a lot of lower leagues, most professional players don't earn that much.

> **"I had to change my style ...and everyone knows the result"**

Class of '62...(from left) Zagallo with Vava, Pele, Didi and Garrincha

What is your fondest memory from your playing days?
I've had a lot of great moments. Everywhere I played I won titles, with Flamengo, Botafogo, with the *Selecao*... it wasn't just about the World Cups. I had many special moments, both as a player and a coach. The biggest moments of my life I owe to my football career, that is for sure.

Is the football better today?
In my era, football was fun, beautiful and skilful. There were more quality games then. Now the game has a lot of fouls, it's too stop-start. In my day technique was the most valued thing in the game and there were more skilful and quality players than we have now. Don't get me wrong, we do have great players today, but not as many, and I still believe the best players today are still not as good as the best players of my time.

If you could rerun your career, would you have done anything differently?
I don't think I would change a thing – though I'd never have said no to the chance of winning more trophies.

Which players in the past 50 years have you most admired?
Pele and Garrincha. The two of them were the greatest players I've ever seen and deserve to be at the top of every list of football legends that is compiled. But there were other players, such as Nilton Santos, Zico and Juninho Botelho, who made a big impression, and that is just talking about the Brazilians...

Who was the biggest influence on your career?
I can't really say there was a single person. As a player I liked to dribble a lot, but when I was playing for Flamengo, [Manuel Fleitas] Solich arrived at the club. Every time I tried a dribble in training he whistled for a foul against my team. He used to tell me: "Dribble only when it's necessary." So I had to change my style and started playing a kind of dual role during matches, as both a winger and a full-back. I can't remember anybody else doing that at the time. In the *Selecao*, coach [Vicente] Feola changed the team's playing style to adapt to me. We scrapped our 4-2-4 formation and started playing 4-3-3. Everyone knows the result: we ended up as world champions. So in fact it was the things I feared most that ended up helping me become who I am today. You could say I was influenced against my will!

Do you miss being involved in the game nowadays?
Oh no, I've done my time...don't forget I've spent almost 60 years in football as player and coach. After that, I had to take a break and start taking care of myself and my family. Life was very intense during my football career. Nowadays, my sole concern is to spend my days with my wife, my sons and grandsons. I have a quiet life but I enjoy every single moment of it.

Dan Brennan & Joao Drigues

● 1961

To show it was a truly global football magazine October 1961's *World Soccer* carried a feature on Persia, written by Wilfred Schumacher: "Persia might still be a tiny member of the world's footballing family, nevertheless it is a country bursting with big ambitions for the future. Former Hungarian international player [Jozsef] Meszaros has undertaken the training of the national side and the first notable success came at the end of 1959: Persia won second place behind Israel in the Asian Games, held in India."

Also featured that year were the first mutterings about a European Super League. Graham Payne wrote: "The English League who once frowned upon the European Cup, came up with an idea which, quite easily and most probably, will lead to the formation of that much discussed European League.

"It is a Summer League, taking in two leading clubs from six countries: England, Scotland, France, Hungary, Italy and Spain."

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Viktor PONEDELNIK

Spartak Moscow & Soviet Union
The striker whose extra-time header won his nation their only international trophy

WHAT WERE YOUR first impressions of the 1960 Nations Cup finals?
There were only four teams so our first game was the semi-final against Czechoslovakia in Marseille. We got to our hotel quite late one evening and I didn't feel very well so our coach, Gavriil Kachalin, told me to miss training and I went straight to bed. When I woke in the morning it felt as if I had new wings. When I went out on to the training ground the doctor was amazed. He said to Kachalin and Andrei Starostin, who was our chief: "Look at Ponedelnik, he is another man." I'm sure it was all due to the Mediterranean climate.

Were you kept in the hotel or allowed out?
We went out on the eve of the game – out to sea to the Chateau d'If where Dumas' *Count of Monte Cristo* spent years in jail. There was a cathedral there and suddenly [team-mate] Valentin Bubukin called out for "God the Almighty to grant us victory in the semi-final as well as in the Final". We all knew it was not the done thing to laugh inside the cathedral but when we got outside somebody asked Bubukin: "Val, are you superstitious?" and he said: "No, not at all. How can I be? I'm a communist."

What do you remember of the semi-finals?
There we were, in the Velodrome, leading 3-0 when the referee awarded the Czechs a penalty. Soviet football was not very well known abroad generally but [Lev] Yashin was famous already. The Czech players all hesitated. It took them some time to decide who'd take the kick; they all refused, one by one. That's always a bad sign, of course. Finally [Josef] Vojta stepped up, shot and missed. We won, and then when we returned to the hotel we found out that the French had been leading Yugoslavia 4-1 in Paris yet lost 5-4. We were absolutely amazed.

> **"In the Final it was terrible, I was being kicked all over the place. At half-time I put on a second pair of shin-pads"**

The Final was in the old Parc des Princes. What happened?
I remember it was raining and the Yugoslavs came out intending to kill us off in the first 15 or 20 minutes. But Yashin was brilliant. Milan Galic made it 1-0 to them but as the first half went on I sensed that our opponents were growing frustrated. I was being marked by Jovan Miladinovic. It was terrible, he kicked me all over the place. At half-time in the dressing room Kachalin and Starostin calmed us down and told us just to play our best football. I put on a second pair of shin-pads! Gradually we took the initiative. Bubukin shot powerfully from 30 metres, their goalkeeper [Blagoje Vidinic] stopped the ball but Slava [Metreveli] pounced as quick as lightning to equalise. The Yugoslavs were out on their feet, but it was still 1-1 after 90 minutes. We collapsed on the pitch, everybody absolutely shattered. Then we heard Starostin and Kachalin saying: "Boys, it's going our way. Look at them. They've no strength left. And they were right."

And your winning goal?
It was in the 112th or 113th minute. Yashin threw the ball to [Igor] Netto who passed it to [Mikheil] Meskhi who beat one defender and crossed towards the penalty spot. I threw myself forward to try to head the ball into the corner of the net but I went down under a pile of defenders so I never saw what happened. I was still face down in the mud when I heard the fans cheering and I thought: "Thanks, God!" It was the greatest moment of my entire career.

And then...?
It took us a while to get up and get back for the restart but what was amazing was that the Yugoslavs were still lying on the pitch, showing no desire to get up. Later we were told

that, if they won, Marshal Tito had promised them land with cottages at the seaside, apartments in the best parts of Belgrade and a lot of money. Anyway we finished the game and the cup was handed to Netto. We were expected to do a lap of honour but it was torture. We got back to the dressing room so exhausted we had no energy to shower or change or even talk. Then suddenly the thin little voice of our doctor was heard through the silence telling Yashin: "But Lev Ivanovich, I always told you we'd win!" Everybody burst out laughing. Yashin got up, raised his enormous fist in the air and said: "Professor, you are the greatest. You are the man whose name should go down in history!"

● 1962

World Soccer covered its first World Cup finals with the tournament held in Chile. The host nation finished third and holders Brazil retained the trophy they won for the first time in 1958.

Brazil's success was built on continuity as eight of the team – it would have been nine had Pele not been injured earlier in the tournament – from the previous Final in 1958 kept their places four years later.

Also featured in *World Soccer* that year was an interview conducted two months prior to the World Cup finals with referee Ken Aston, later in charge of the notorious "Battle of Santiago".

In the August 1962 edition, Leslie Page wrote: "Aston told me at his Barkingside [Essex] home: 'You can detect the moment "bite" creeps into a game. That is the time to take action.'

"Better it seemed to attempt a robbery of the Bank of England than a contravention of soccer law beneath Mr Aston's nose."

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Going for glory...Ponedelnik (centre) tests Yugoslavia keeper Vidinic with an acrobatic lob in the 1960 European Nations Cup Final at Parc des Princes

Who were your best players?
Everybody who was out on the pitch. I would never single out anybody from that team that day.

Did you think this competition would become so important?
Of course we prepared properly for it and, naturally, dreamed of winning, but what was interesting was that before flying to France we were not put under any pressure by anybody. Usually, in those days, athletes were summoned to the Department of Propaganda of the Central Committee of the Communist Party to receive their orders. It was a must. But not that time.

Why not?
I think that was down to Andrei Petrovitch Starostin, who was highly trusted and was the link between the State Sport Committee and the Central Committee of the Communist Party. Naturally he talked to his players but in a friendly sort of way so we felt at ease and able to play the game we wanted. But, honestly, it took us some time to understand exactly what we had won.

How did your career and lifestyle compare with the stars of today?
I'm not keen to compare it. We were treated like heroes but nobody thought about money. We were told in France that we would be paid 1,500 or 2,000 dollars and were promised we would be paid in full back in Moscow in roubles. Well, it's funny, looking back. We went back to Moscow, we went back to our clubs and 50 years later we're still waiting for the roubles to pour in! But what mattered most for us was that we were playing for the idea and for our country.

A different era...
Yes, now it's all changed. What's odd now is that I cannot understand why everybody in the West – especially the players we played against – are so sure that the old footballers of the Soviet national team became businessmen and millionaires. They are always so surprised to find that we have no business and no millions. I live a normal life and I have a good pension and that's it. I am not saying life is bad. Thank God we have had recognition from the Russian Football Union.

What do you think of football today?
The World Cup in South Africa was typical of modern football. There was a lot of hard work, tough games physically, a lot of talk and nothing more. We used to see South Americans with excellent technique, highly intelligent and always striving for the higher standards. But what do we have now? Even Brazil now pick players of mediocre European quality. European football is no better, except for this Spanish team. They were excellent. That's the future of football. Then there were the young Germans. Maybe, in two or three years, they will set the standard. But many of the African teams have lost their identity. Pity. I respected them so much in the past; now they're just dull to watch.

Who was the best player you ever saw?
Several. Yashin, Pele, Maradona, Cruyff, Beckenbauer.

And the best defender you ever played against?
The one who didn't kick my legs black and blue! But, frankly, I cannot remember any such player...

Keir Radnedge

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George EASTHAM

Newcastle United, Arsenal, Stoke City & England

A member of the 1966 World Cup squad, he was the Bosman of his day

WHEN YOU ORIGINALLY set out to win your freedom of contract case against Newcastle United, did you realise that you were blazing the trail for future professionals?

I never saw myself as that at all. All I wanted to do was get a fair deal and play football.

How has the game changed since you were a player?

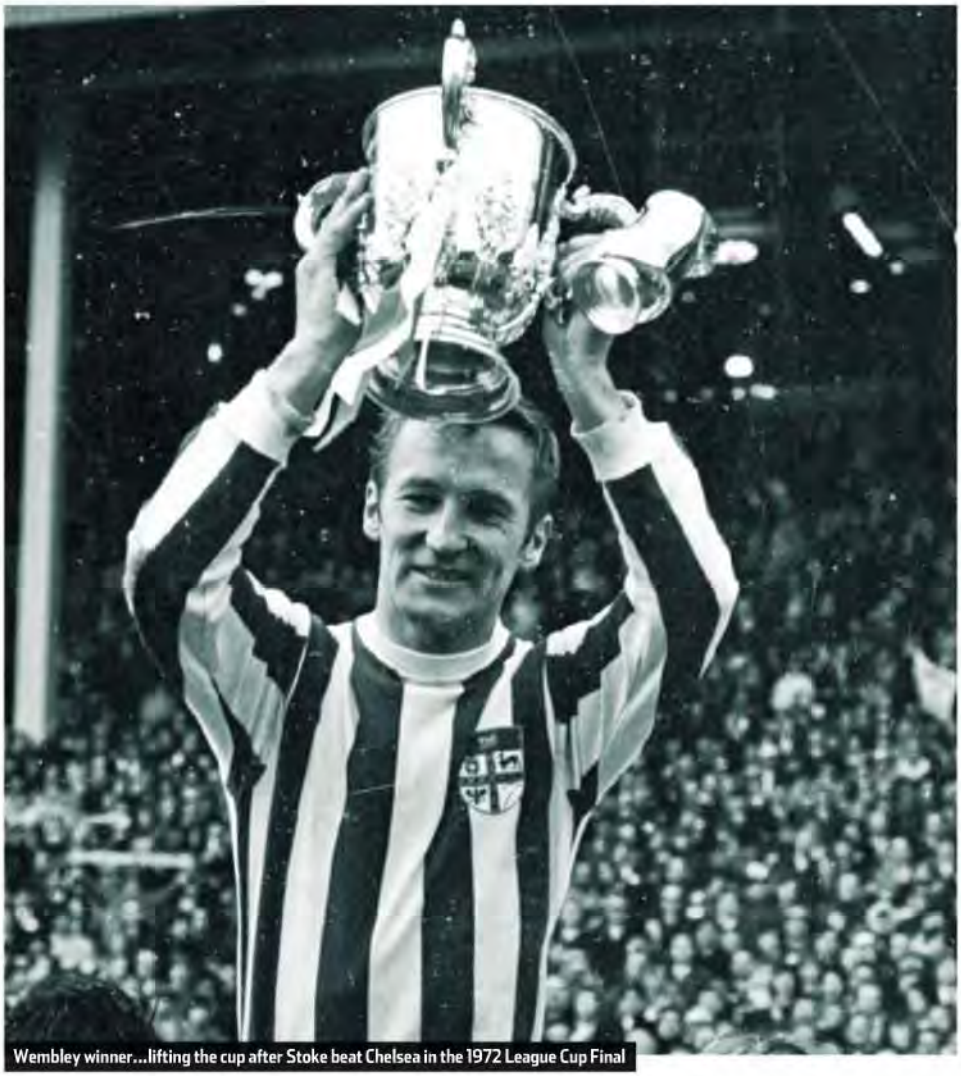
These days, all too often, I find myself wanting to fall asleep during games. Negative tactics are spoiling the spectacle. We've gone from having five attackers in my day, to 4-4-2, to 4-5-1. Where will it end? With 10-0-0? There are far too many 0-0 and 1-0 games these days, with teams putting everyone behind the ball. That's not what people go to watch football for. They want to see goals and be entertained. Even the wingers track back now. You've got wingers tackling the opposition wingers, who then also have to get beyond the full-backs. The English game is becoming more and more like watching Italian football.

Are players today paid too much?

In my day we could never have possibly imagined that you'd end up with the kind of money being paid to players now. I think it's all a bit much, to be honest. These days, even ordinary players can earn enough in a year to set themselves up for life. It certainly wasn't like that in our day. Not that I have any regrets. I loved my life as a footballer.

What is your fondest memory from your playing days?

Winning the League Cup Final against Chelsea with Stoke City was a terrific moment for me of course, particularly scoring the winner at the age I did. [Eastham was 35 at the time, becoming the oldest player to win the competition.]



Wembley winner...lifting the cup after Stoke beat Chelsea in the 1972 League Cup Final

What about regrets?

I'd have liked to have played in the 1966 World Cup. Alf [Ramsey] made his decision and he got it right. He won the tournament, so how could you criticise him? In those days you didn't have substitutes, of course. Once the team was winning, there was no need to change it.

Who was the biggest influence on your career?

My father [George Eastham Snr, himself an England international] was very much my football mentor. We actually played together for a period at Ards in Northern Ireland. He set me on my way in the game.

Dan Brennan

● 1963

Brian Glanville wrote for *World Soccer* for the first time in April 1963. In prophetic fashion, our long-standing columnist penned the following prose some 47 years ago: "In keeping with the economic processes of the day, football seems more and more to be moving to a concentration of power; a world in which the strong survive at the expense of the weak. We have seen it in Italian football. We have seen it in Spanish football.

"The removal of the maximum wage has brought us face to face with the possibility of its happening in England too.

"Mr Matt Busby, the manager of Manchester United, told us the other day that not only was it going to happen, but that it would be a good thing for the standard of the game. Mr Alan Brown, manager of Sunderland, seemed less sanguine; and so am I."

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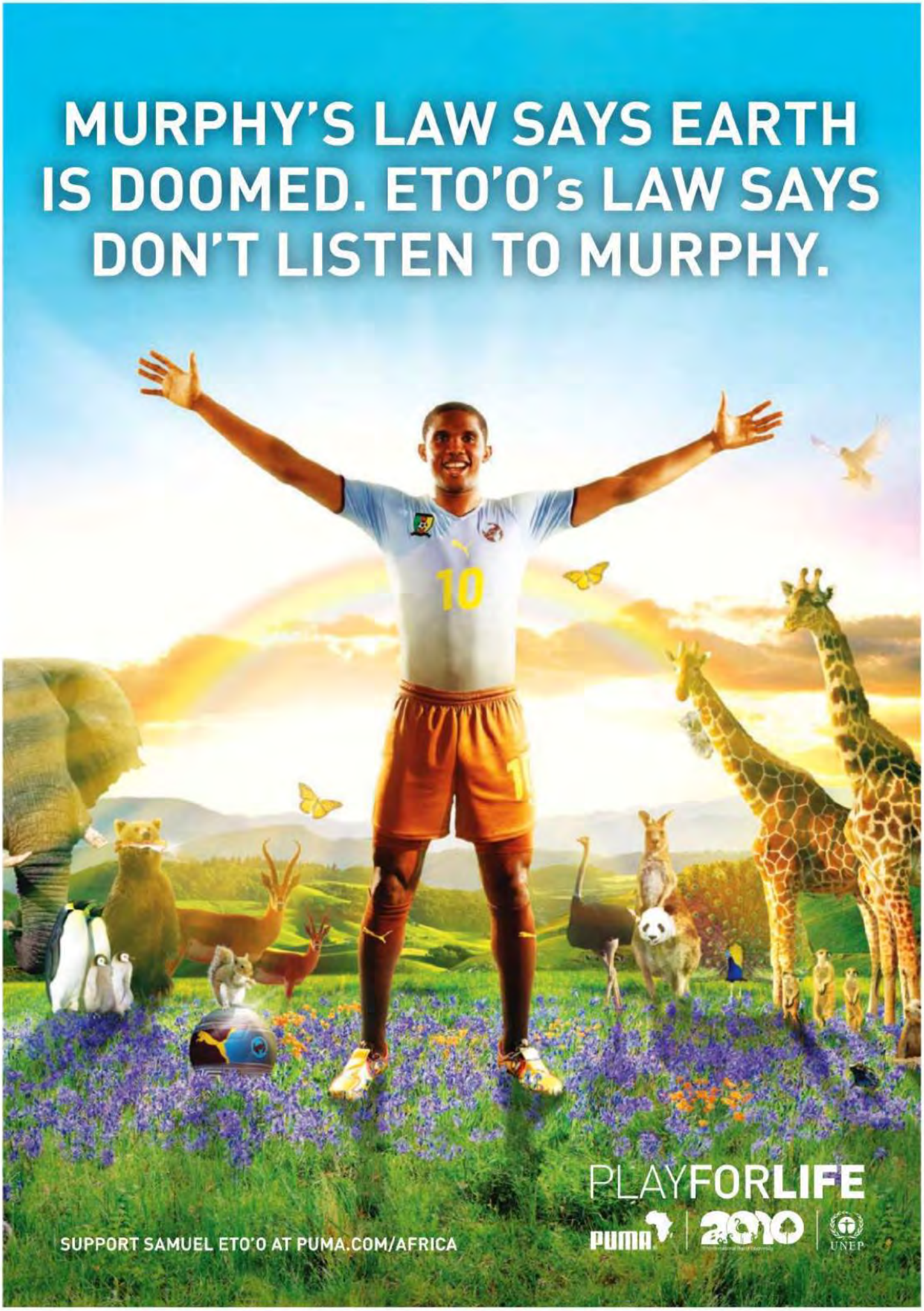
MURPHY'S LAW SAYS EARTH IS DOOMED. ETO'O's LAW SAYS DON'T LISTEN TO MURPHY.



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EUSEBIO

Benfica & Portugal
"The Black Pearl" is considered Portugal's greatest-ever player

HOW DO YOU FEEL about a statue of you being put up in Lisbon?
When they put up the statue, I discussed it with my wife and family over a meal and told them what it meant to me. Tributes like this are normally posthumous, but I'm alive and kicking and there's my statue for all to see, projecting an image of me and my style of football. Did you know there's another statue of me by the same sculptor in the United States? These displays of affection really touch me. It means that my career and life have been worthwhile. I think my personality has contributed to the affection that people show because it's important not to be pretentious. When I was playing, I always respected my opponents and never thought myself better than my team-mates.

What were the low points of your career?
As a player, defeats always got me down. I found it very hard to take the defeat against England in the semi-final of the 1966 World Cup and even today I would say I haven't got over it. Every time that game goes through my mind now, my heart aches. With Benfica, I still find it hard to accept that we lost two European Cup Finals which we should have cruised through – against Milan at Wembley and Inter at the San Siro. The Final against PSV in 1988, when I was assistant manager, was also a terrible disappointment.

Did you sometimes play when you weren't fully fit?
It's true that I often played when I was in really bad shape, but I liked playing, I always enjoyed it. Maybe this is why people look back on my career so fondly. When I was injured, I would look at my team-mates and I could see that they were downhearted. But if I said "I'm going to play", there was a buzz in the dressing room. I always remember how the Benfica defender Cruz used to call me "the ace in our pack".

> **"I lost count of the injections I had. But I got used to it and could bear the pain – normally I would bite a towel when they injected me"**

What was your best experience with Benfica?
My introduction to professional football was so rapid that I didn't really realise what was happening. I arrived in Portugal from Mozambique on 17 December 1960 and I was in the Benfica first team soon after. Then it was a whirlwind: Portuguese championships, European championships, seven-times Portuguese top goalscorer, five times in succession, and to cap it all the European Player of the Year in 1965. I think 1965 was the best time; frankly I never dreamt that I would be considered the best footballer in Europe.

The surgery you underwent has passed into football mythology...
The injuries were a torment. In those days, the 1960s, forwards didn't get the protection that they get today. By the time of my fourth operation I went to the shrine of Fatima and prayed to God to stop the suffering, but it wasn't to be. More than anything, the operations put an end to my playing days at Benfica. I often played before I had fully recovered, although never against my will.

And what about all those comebacks?
Eighteen days after a knee operation, I went on a trip to Argentina with Benfica and made my return too early; my knee broke down again. The problem was that Benfica could earn a lot more with Eusebio playing than without. I always took Benfica's interests to heart and thought that if I could play for 15 or 20 minutes, my knee would stand up to it and the club would get the money it deserved.

There's a famous story about when you played in Munich even though injured...
That was the time we went to play against Bayern in Germany. On the afternoon of the game, I hurt my left big toe and it filled up with blood. I could hardly walk. The coach, Jimmy Hagan, told me that I wasn't going to play. As the team got changed I just sat on the bench. Then a businessman, a Hungarian who was a friend of the previous coach, Bela Guttmann, saw that I hadn't got changed and asked me why I wasn't playing. I explained and he said that it wasn't right, that the public had come to see me play. He spoke to our chairman, Fernando Neves, and to Jimmy Hagan, who told him that I couldn't play. When I saw all the fuss, I asked Jimmy Hagan and the doctor if they could draw the blood off from my toe. The doctor said that he could try, but it would still be painful. So I let him do what he had to do and then our masseur bandaged the toe and made me try it out before I went out onto the pitch. The businessman was delighted, the crowd who had seen me hobbling before the game were delirious and

Disappointment...in action against Milan at Wembley in 1963

1964

Two years prior to England hosting the World Cup finals, Brian Glanville pleaded for the abolition of goal average to decide the outcome of the groups should two teams be level on points.

In the July 1964 issue of World Soccer, Glanville claimed that it made for boring and negative football in the 1962 tournament, with teams afraid to lose, and wrote: "Who can forget the sterile horrors of the England v Bulgaria match at Rancagua when England, who had only to draw to qualify, found themselves faced by a Bulgarian team with no hope of qualifying at all – and for some occult reason, decided to pack its defence with eight players?

"England in due course decided to play as safe as Bulgaria, and the consequence was utter tedium, a travesty of any football, let alone World Cup football.

"It was as well that only a couple of thousand spectators were there, to be bored to distraction."

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Beckenbauer was surprised to see me because I had told him I wouldn't play. I came off after 20 minutes to a standing ovation.

How did you survive the injuries...and the treatments?
I lost count of the injections I had. But towards the end of my career I got used to it and I could bear the pain. Normally I would bite on a towel when they injected me. It became a routine, I would go home and put ice on my knee to allow me to play the next day. When it came to the fifth and sixth operations, all I could do was pray to God that they wouldn't take my leg off above the knee.

What was the best goal you ever scored?
One I scored against La Chaux-de-Fonds in the European Cup was special. I took a pass from Simoes, dribbled past three players, lifted the ball past another, and then smashed it into the net before it hit the ground. As I turned away, I heard the Chaux-de-Fonds keeper shouting "Eusebio, Eusebio" behind me and I thought he was going to hit me, but he just wanted to congratulate me.

Who was the best coach of your career?
I had great coaches at Benfica, but Bela Guttmann was the best. He pushed me on at the right time and believed in me. He understood so much about the game. In those first training sessions, I was suffering from the cold weather and had to wear two or three tracksuits – they were grey and we looked like convicts! Guttmann saw my speed, the way I controlled the ball and the way I went up for crosses. He told the chairman, Gastao Silva, that they should get the paperwork done as soon as possible.

Do you think you have become a legend?
It's been said that I am a legend, but I've never considered myself greater than others. I must say that getting to the top is hard, but staying there for a long time is much more difficult. I'm still recognised nowadays and I love signing autographs for kids even though they are far too young to have seen me play; many of them are not even Benfica supporters. Each night before I go to bed I sign photographs to give to fans the next day.

Manuel Delgado/ESM

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Denis LAW

Manchester United, Manchester City & Scotland

Scotland's joint-record goalscorer and the man United supporters still refer to as "the King"

HOW HAS FOOTBALL changed over the last 50 years?

The facilities have improved so much from the 1960s – the pitches, the stadiums, the training grounds, the preparation of players, the diet – but what hasn't changed is the ability of the players themselves. Despite all the improvements in football, the best club team ever to my mind is still the Real Madrid side of the late 1950s and the 1960 European Cup Final. I don't think any team has been better. The Dutch team of 1974 were very good, but the best national team is still the 1970 Brazil side. Wow, I liked watching them play. We've had 40 to 50 years since, but still no better teams. Or maybe it's just that I'm becoming a grumpy old man these days!

Who was your favourite team to watch?

No doubt about it, that's Real Madrid, winners of the European Cup five times in a row. I still think of it as the European Cup. Now they call it the Champions League, but the name is wrong because so many of the clubs are not champions any more. Of course, it's great for the fans these days because more clubs are involved, and maybe some of them are teams who would never have got there otherwise. I do think it's marvellous that so many supporters now get a chance to see all the great world stars of the day.

What are your favourite memories as a player?

The greatest honour is to play for your country, so my first cap for Scotland is the best of all. I also cherish the fact that I played in an FA Cup Final [he scored Manchester United's first goal in the 3-1 victory over Leicester City in 1963]. In my day it was something very special, a day when the whole country stopped to watch. It was a dream as a boy to play in the Cup Final. It's not the same now, of course, the Cup has lost some of its lustre and I think that's a shame. Another wonderful memory is going back to Wembley later that year to play for the Rest of the World against England to commemorate 100 years of the FA. I was just a boy really and there I was playing alongside my all-time hero Alfredo Di Stefano. Others in the team were Francisco Gento, Lev Yashin, Djalma Santos and Ferenc Puskas. England beat us 2-1 but I scored our goal and Puskas set me up. That was a big thrill.

Top that...1963 FA Cup winner Law flanked by David Herd and Maurice Setters

> **"I was just a boy and there I was playing alongside Di Stefano my great hero"**

Is football better today than in your era?

I love watching the game today and there are some wonderful players around, but I don't see any teams that are as good as the past – and it is a team game. If there is one thing I don't like about the modern game it's the way they keep messing around with the actual footballs. Why do they need to do that? It doesn't do the game any good at all.

Who was your hardest opponent?

There were some tough men playing in the 1960s, men like Tommy Smith, Ron "Chopper" Harris and Norman Hunter. You knew you'd been in a game with them. But the best all-round defender I ever faced was probably Franz Beckenbauer. He wasn't a hard man but he wasn't soft either. And could he play when he had the ball...I admired him very much.

Are you happy that you played in your era and not today?

I loved my playing days, but I would also like to play today – just for one season. Then I could retire from the game aged 21 with enough money to last me for the rest of my life!

Which players in the last 50 years have you most admired?

What a lovely question. There are so many. My favourite goalscorer was Jimmy Greaves, without a doubt. He was the master of putting the ball in the net. Then I have to be a little biased and remember some of my fellow Scots. We had some marvellous players – Jimmy Johnstone, Dave Mackay, Jim Baxter and Billy Bremner. I also think about the great Spurs double team of 1961 – I haven't seen a better English club team since them. They were wonderful to watch. And I can't finish without mentioning two of my Manchester United team-mates, George Best and Bobby Charlton. I had a bad knee and missed out on the 1968 European Cup Final victory, but they both scored in that game against Benfica and they were the greatest of players to have alongside you on the pitch. So many memories. Playing with George and Bobby and other men from that Manchester United team like Nobby Stiles and Pat Crerand was very, very special.

Jim Holden

1965

Eric Batty, writing in July's *World Soccer*, described the European Cup Final between Internazionale and Benfica as the "worst Final since it all began".

He claimed that the venue, Inter's own San Siro stadium, left Benfica with a less than 30 per cent chance of winning the match. Six hours of torrential rain which turned the pitch into a swamp, an injury to Benfica's goalkeeper Costa Pereira and a poor referee, added to the Italian club's defence-orientated tactics, all combined to create a dull affair unworthy of the biggest occasion in club football.

In the May edition, Philip Rising wrote of Denis Law: "Law probably has to put up with more harsh treatment on a football field than his less-skilled counterparts. But he never complains. Never shirks a tackle. Asks no quarter and gives none.

"However much you may disagree with this feature of Law's Scottish character, you cannot but marvel at the soccer artistry of this flamboyant maestro."

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Uwe SEELER

Hamburg & West Germany
Loyal servant for club and country, and the first player to score in four World Cups

IN THE EARLY PART of your career you combined semi-professionalism with Hamburg with a job representing a sportswear firm. How difficult was that ?
I won't deny it was a hard slog at times. My good fortune was that the club did their best to accommodate me. But at the time it was important for me to have a career apart from playing football. I was thinking ahead to when I could no longer kick a ball. For me, it was a good thing. It was a good balance to have in my life.

You spent your entire career at one club, Hamburg. You even turned down a move to Internazionale in 1961. Why?
I would have made a financial killing, but, you know, my heart was in Hamburg. I was a Hamburg boy. My father used to play for Hamburg and so did my brother, Dieter. I could not easily break those ties, especially when the fans were so against me going. I'm a loyal person and liked the security.

Are you happy you played in your era and not today?
Of course I would have earned so much more money if I'd been born a couple of decades later. A couple of seasons as a top professional these days and you are set up for life. I don't harbour any regrets though. Football in my time was more human, warmer and enjoyable. For us it was a sport. Now it's a thoroughly serious business with all the pressure that involves.

How different was your era from today?
Unrecognisable. At training sessions today, the media and fans are out in force; we were lucky to have one or two journalists and 20 supporters. Commercialism didn't really come into it in my time. On the rare occasion when you were asked to do an advert you had to ask the permission of the DFB. I remember 1954 World Cup winner Jupp Posipal being fined for not getting permission. Modern pros would laugh at that.

Skipper...Seeler leads out West Germany

"No point in going over old ground but England's third goal did not cross the line"

What's been the biggest change in football since you stopped playing?
Bosman. It sparked massive wage inflation and that can't be a healthy development.

Are modern players paid too much?
Not so much the big stars. The problem is paying a lot to the average ones. Do we get value for money here?

What particularly annoys you about the modern game?
Anybody who tries to make football too complicated. It's a simple game and you are making a big mistake in my opinion when you resort to too much theory and hocus pocus.

What is your fondest memory from your playing days?
Breaking into the *Nationalmanschaft* just a few months after the side made history by winning the 1954 World Cup. A wonderful moment for a 17-year-old. Also, scoring in a 2-1 win in Sweden in a qualifier for the 1966 World Cup. It secured our spot in the finals and was very satisfying on an individual level as it was my first game back in the side after seven months out with an Achilles injury. Then there was helping Hamburg win the German Cup and, of course, Germany's 3-2 victory over England in the quarter-finals of the 1970 World Cup.

After West Germany went 2-0 down in that game, you scored the equaliser with an unusual header, taking the tie into extra-time. Did you mean it?
Yes I did, though I know it wasn't pretty. I wasn't in a good starting position to get to the cross from Karl-Heinz Schnellinger. I had to go backwards to meet it and simply tried to get something on the ball. My connection was half back of the head, half temple and it looped into the goal with the keeper stranded.

Your biggest disappointments?
Naturally the 1966 World Cup Final. No point going over old ground, but England's third goal did not cross the line. Our defeat to Sweden in the semis of the 1958 World Cup was a bitter blow and to make matters worse my friend and colleague Fritz Walter was badly injured.

Which players of the past 50 years have you most admired ?
Fritz Walter was a class apart in everything he did. So was Franz Beckenbauer, Pele, Di Stefano, Puskas, Eusebio, the Spaniard Suarez and Bobby Charlton.

Nick Bidwell

● 1966

England won the World Cup for the first time, Real Madrid won the European Cup for the sixth time and one of the greatest players ever, Alfredo Di Stefano hung up his boots.

In the September 1966 issue of *World Soccer*, Leslie Page described England's famous win: "There can be little doubt that winning the World Cup is the best thing that has happened to English soccer for 30 years at least and possibly for a longer period. The moment when Bobby Moore accepted the trophy from the Queen will live with us for the remainder of our sporting days."

Earlier in the year, in the June 1966 issue, Roger MacDonald commented on Di Stefano's retirement: "It is fitting that Di Stefano should retire when the club he made great, Real Madrid, promise to be great once more. For no other footballer, not even Matthews or Pele, has taken a club to such a pinnacle of fame by his own brilliance."

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Dragan DZAJIC

Red Star Belgrade & Yugoslavia

Left winger from the former Yugoslavia who, despite not playing in Europe's biggest leagues, was one of the finest players of his generation

ARE YOU happy that you played in your era and not today?
Yes I am. But first of all I am happy that I played football at all, regardless of the time, whether it was in my era or in any other. I loved the game.

Are players today paid too much?
I am not one of those people who are jealous if others make a lot of money. I earned more than the generations before me, and the generations after me started earning more and more. It's a logical development. But not all players today are overpaid. There are some abnormal wages and those big players themselves admit that, but there are also a lot of players in many countries who earn relatively modest amounts, bearing in mind what they will do after they finish their careers.

What is your fondest memory from your playing days?
It has to be the semi-final of the European Championship in Italy [in 1968] and the goal I scored against England [in Yugoslavia's 1-0 victory]. It brought me fame outside the borders of Yugoslavia. Afterwards I was called up for various matches played by UEFA and FIFA selections and I became an internationally well-known player.

How different was your era from today?
Football is still football. Sure, nowadays teams are physically fitter, quicker, and better prepared, but as far as technique is concerned, I would not say the present generation have the advantage. Basic things like dribbling, crosses, heading – all that existed before in the same way. If you watch a game from my time on TV and compare the pace with today, you get the impression that the difference is huge. But I am not 100 per cent sure it is indeed that big. The Ajax and Holland national teams in the early and mid 1970s, in my view, played in the same impressive way Barcelona and the Spain national team have done in the past two or three years. It was a real pleasure to watch Ajax. They were a textbook for every other team.

Challenge...Dzajic (right) takes on West Germany's Hans-Georg Schwarzenbeck

> **It was a real pleasure to watch Ajax. They were a textbook for every other team**

You never played for a big club abroad...
I had various offers but back then the regulations in Yugoslavia were that a player could sign with a foreign club only at the age of 28. I had the chance to sign for Real Madrid, but I don't want to go into details why that transfer fell through. Yes, I'm sorry I didn't play for a big club abroad like Real Madrid, but I don't regret playing for Bastia, where I had a great time.

Which players in the past 50 years have you most admired?
Pele first of all. I also liked Omar Sivori very much. I appreciated Eusebio, Florian Albert, Sandro Mazzola, Johan Cruyff and Beckenbauer, and in recent times Ronaldo, Ronaldinho and Messi.

Is football better today than in your era?
Look at it this way: somewhere football is better, somewhere it isn't. For example, our football [in Serbia and the former Yugoslavia] isn't better than it was in my era. In other places, say, in Africa and Asia, it certainly is.

Who was your biggest influence?
First of all the man who brought me from a small club [Jedinstvo Ub] to Red Star, the late Rade Djunisijevic, a former local player and later club chairman. Then, of course, it was Red Star as a club, and naturally Miljan Miljanic, the coach with whom I spent the most time of my career.

Do you have a particular anecdote from your playing days?
Well, there's my appearance for Red Star against Atletico Madrid [European Cup quarter-final in March 1974]. At the time I was doing my compulsory military service [12 months] and players were not allowed to play for their clubs, only for the national team if they were called up. But I was keen to help my club reach the semi-finals. I got permission from my commander for five days off but I was taking a big chance in playing. I decided the risk was worth it but, unfortunately, we lost 2-0 [the first leg in Belgrade], although we were the better team and missed a bunch of great chances.

Why have Yugoslavia and now Serbia national teams not lived up to high expectations at World Cups?
One of the main reasons is that we don't have coaches who can deal, first of all, psychologically, with such a big tournament. We have always had good players and the potential for success, but usually the leadership is not good enough. In South Africa we thought we had a good team and a quality coach [Radomir Antic] but we again failed.

Vladimir Novak

● 1967

A year after his goal had stunned Italy in the 1966 World Cup, *World Soccer* interviewed North Korean hero Pak Doo-ik under the headline "The name is familiar... but not the face!"

In the September 1967 issue, Pak described his goal against Italy thus: "I was standing on the right side of the penalty box, my back to goal. I could not even think of being able to shoot. At the same time I was aware that if I received the ball, they would surely tackle me.

"In a split second I made up my mind. Playing a trick, I run to take the ball, but let it go. Two Italians followed me.

"Then I suddenly turned back, received the ball and from just inside the penalty area I shot past Albertosi."

Also in the September 1967 issue, *World Soccer* reported the kick-off of club football in the USA for the first time in the shape of the NPSL. Ten teams, split into two divisions of five, contested the championship.

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Bobby CHARLTON

Manchester United & England

Survivor of the 1958 Munich air crash who became a World Cup winner in 1966 and is one of England's all-time greats

WHAT IS YOUR favourite memory from your playing days?
Obviously, the World Cup was a fantastic highlight, I have to say that. It was the way the match went, what it meant to everybody. It has gone down in football folklore. I'll never forget that day. But I always say that playing for your country is the jam on the bread and that playing for your club is the everyday business. Winning the European Cup with Manchester United in 1968 was so special for that reason, and because of all the circumstances, the history of the club, the tragedy of the Munich air crash. That makes the European Cup victory the most significant for me. I really think we would have won it that season in 1958 but for the accident. But it is hard to separate the World Cup and the European Cup wins. Neither will ever be forgotten.

Which players have you most admired?
So many and it's very hard to pick out just one. But if I had to I'd go just outside the 50 years and say Duncan Edwards. I was alongside him every day at Old Trafford and he made me feel so inferior because he could do it all, and better than anybody – pass with left or right foot, score goals from 30 yards, head the ball so wonderfully. He could play in any position and be the best. I was in awe of Duncan and he was a giant already by the time of the disaster. I liked Johan Cruyff very much – and Ferenc Puskas. He didn't look like a footballer, but could he play. I remember how he embarrassed England at Wembley. When you go to the Nep Stadium in Budapest there is a plaque on the wall about Puskas and his international career that tells you he played 85 games and scored 84 goals. That is just sensational. Maybe to a lot of people he looked arrogant. But he wasn't. He was just the most confident player you ever saw.

"When you saw Puskas he didn't look like a footballer but could he play. Some people thought he was arrogant but he wasn't – he was just the most confident player you ever saw"

Who was your most difficult opponent?
Again, I think about so many but the hardest for me, and certainly the most irritating as an opponent, was Dave Mackay of Tottenham and Scotland. He was irritating in a funny way as well as being one of the toughest tacklers of any generation. He would talk to you all through the game, trying to put you off. He would tell you to shoot when you were 60 yards away from goal, things like that. Although he was a hard man on the field he always played the game in the best spirit. I was fortunate in that I never suffered an injury playing against him. Strangely, it was Dave himself who broke a leg at Old Trafford one year.

How different was your era from today?
Everything has changed, especially off the pitch. Footballers have everything at their disposal now; the medical attention is wonderful, the financial security is amazing, the equipment is great, the pitches are mostly perfect. And there are so many people employed to make a football club work well. Hundreds of people are employed at Old Trafford and it will be the same at every club in the top leagues. Today so many games are on TV. In my day there were very few live games and the fans played a much larger part in matches. Now they have seen all the players and know all about them. The crowds are quieter these days.

Is football better today than 50 years ago?
Yes, I would say totally better for the players in terms of all the off-the-field things that I've just spoken of. And in so many ways, it is totally better on the pitch as well. Look at all the systems – there is one for every eventuality in a match. It's amazing. When Alf Ramsey brought in 4-3-3 in the 1966 World Cup it was considered so revolutionary. Now they change tactics throughout a game depending on the opponents and the match situation. Not so good is the diving to try to win free-kicks and penalties. I don't like to see it and it didn't used to be the British way. Overall, though, I'd say footballers haven't changed that much. At heart it's still a game to be played and enjoyed.

Would you like to play today?
Sometimes, very rarely, I do think I would like to be playing in a modern team, one of those which passes the ball so well and with such style and at such pace on these excellent pitches. I was very happy in my era, but when I see a team like Spain of today, yes, I'd enjoy playing with them. They play such stylish football and they aren't over physical, nasty or negative.

Who was your biggest influence?
There were a lot of people, starting with my parents. Someone who did have a big impact was Jimmy Murphy, the coach at Manchester United and who was also manager of Wales for a time. He was the man who spoke to me most at Old Trafford and I learned so much from him. I would come back in the afternoons to work with him as a youngster and I was prepared to listen to his wisdom. Jimmy turned me from having an amateur mentality into being a professional. There was also Matt Busby, of course, at United, and he was a different personality, but maybe Jimmy was the greatest influence on my football development.

If you could turn back the clock...?
I would try to be a better tackler and a stronger header of the ball. I'm not sure it would be any different though. They were not my strengths. But I was very happy with my career. You might play on muddy or icy pitches, but you just got on with it – and it was such an enjoyable way to earn a living. I never wanted to do anything else.

Jim Holden

● 1968

June's *World Soccer* featured a piece by Arthur Rotmil on the demise of the Brazilian winger nicknamed Garrincha, which translates as "little bird".

Garrincha had been a major influence in Brazil's two World Cup wins in 1958 and 1962, but by the time the 1966 tournament came along, with arthritis setting in, his physical powers were on the wane.

Rotmil wrote: "Soon after he couldn't even command a place in his club side Botafogo and left for Corinthians but with little success. Now, the man who once thrilled millions is in dire financial straits.

"A love affair with a film nightclub singer broke up his marriage and no club is willing to engage him simply on past reputation. Recently he was sentenced to 90 days in jail for failing to pay alimony covering his eight daughters.

"The world's greatest winger flies no more. He has crashed to the ground like one of the garrincas he used to shoot down in the jungles of the Rio Grande."

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King of Europe...Charlton believes Manchester United's 1968 European Cup triumph was the most significant win of his career

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Gianni RIVERA

Milan & Italy

The original "Golden Boy" of Italian soccer, a politician and currently head of the Italian football federation's youth section

HAS FOOTBALL CHANGED for the better or worse in the last 50 years?
Life has changed, society has changed, every profession has changed. We've become a much more materialist society, much less interested in personal and interior sensibilities. In that context, football has lost some of its poetry by comparison with before. Nowadays, so much is based on money, while much less is based on the intrinsic values of the sport – the fact that in its origins, football is a game. Today, obviously, professional football is, above all, just that: namely "professional".

You have taken up an appointment as head of the federation's youth section. What are your aims here?
For me, this is a return to an environment that I've always liked, where I can follow up on what youngsters are doing because it's from there that you have to start if you want to change the whole nature of an excessively materialist culture and instil other values. You've got to do something, you've got to try to instil other values, above the idea of having fun. If you're not enjoying yourself when you're playing football, it's hard to know how anybody watching you could enjoy themselves. Kids also have to understand what honesty, fair play and team discipline mean; what it is to be part of a group, how to live and play with one another, how to deal with defeats and setbacks. The first step along the road to being a serious professional is learning how to live a healthy life.

Who were the great players of your era and how do they compare to today's stars?
There have been many great players in the last 50 years, but if I have to name one player, then it has to be Pele. If soccer had not already existed, he would have invented it. Today, I would say there are fewer great players. I get the impression that today's talents do not stand out as much, that in today's football, the great individual talent is sacrificed on the altar of team work. Messi, however, is somebody who could reach those same dizzy heights by the end of his career.

Golden boy...Rivera scored 14 times in 60 appearances for his country

Did your football career help you prepare for a career in politics?
No, there's no world like politics and nothing prepares you for it. Politics is a world where the only motto that counts is *"mors tua vita mea"* (your death is my life).

What changes would you like to see introduced to football today?
There's not much to change. The Italian federation is called the Federazione Giuoco Calcio and I would draw your attention to the word *"giuoco"* (game). We've got to get back to the idea of playing for fun rather than being merely focused on money.

Is Italian football in crisis?
It's revealing that Inter won the Champions League last season with 11 foreigners. To a certain extent that is a clear reflection of the impoverishment of the Italian game. However, it's not just Italian football which is in crisis; it's world football that is in crisis. There does not seem to be the same level of talent about. Obviously, football itself has changed. In the days of man-to-man marking, when the key clashes involved just two players, if one of them was much better, it soon emerged. In today's much fitter, more physical, more zonal game, if you have a good player who wants to try something, who gets past somebody, he has to beat not one but three players to do it – and worse still, some of those three may well try to kick him.

How do you see the future of football?
The problem is that youth-team coaches, for some time now, have opted for strength over skill because that way they feel sure they will win and win immediately. Yet, one of the most positive notes of this year was that the Spanish won the World Cup Final against the Dutch. That was a triumph of skill over brute force.

Paddy Agnew

● 1969

In the December 1969 edition of the magazine, *World Soccer* questioned "the spirit of football" after the Intercontinental Cup [World Club Cup Final] between Estudiantes de la Plata of Argentina and Milan of Italy. The Argentinians, following on from their infamous game against Manchester United the previous year, once again adopted brutal tactics as they lost to Milan 5-3 on aggregate.

Roger MacDonald wrote: "In Argentina the spirit of football as a sport has been irredeemably dishonoured – by violent spectators, weak officials, callous players and cynical clubs – with the infamous Estudiantes in the front line.

"The unbelievable sequence of events that took place in the latest Intercontinental Cup matches could only have happened in Argentina, even, I dare say, only in a game involving Estudiantes."

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TOSTAO

Cruzeiro & Brazil
Attacking star of the 1970 World Cup-winning side, now working in football as a respected pundit

ARE YOU HAPPY you played in your era and not today?
My time was absolutely right for me. In the 1960s and early 70s, the essential elements of the Brazilian game were finesse, intelligence and clairvoyance. My football was played with the brain as well as the feet. I do doubt whether my sort of player would prosper today however. I wasn't that quick and didn't have the physical force.

How different was your era from today?
I know us oldies have a tendency to look back and see everything romantically, but I do sincerely think the game was more healthy and attractive when I played. We played with soul and appreciation of the beauty of a pass, shot or piece of ball control. There was a lyricism and passion which has since seeped away. It was a tragedy when the Brazilian tradition for flair was forgotten by certain coaches in our country in the latter part of the 1970s. Tele Santana restored the sense of improvisation to the *Selecao* at the 1982 and 1986 World Cups. However, the back to basics was not to last.

What is your fondest memory from your playing days?
Unsurprisingly the 1970 World Cup in Mexico. Not the two goals I scored in the finals (in the quarter-final against Peru), or the goals I helped make for others, just the feeling of excitement and pleasure I got from playing in a team which meshed so well together and attacked so fluently. If I say so myself, it was the ultimate football. It was poetry.

Which goals stand out?
I've nice memories of a hat-trick I scored in a 1970 World Cup qualifier in Caracas against Venezuela. The most spectacular was the winner against England in a friendly in 1969. It was what happens when you let your instincts take over. I was down on the floor when I saw the ball coming in my direction and lifted myself up to try a scissor kick. Amazingly it flew in.

Medical career...after retiring as a player, Tostao became a doctor

> **"Brazil in 1970 was the ultimate football. Poetry"**

And your biggest disappointment?
The 1966 World Cup. We were knocked out at the first round stage and I only played in one game, scoring in the defeat to Hungary. I was young enough and presumptuous enough to think I should have been a starter. We got it all wrong. Many of the squad were unfit and there was no method to the organisation.

What's been the biggest change in football since you stopped playing?
The ever-growing exodus of good young Brazilian players to European clubs. Economically it makes sense for them to go; however, it would be in everyone's best interest if these kids did stay in our game for a few more years at least. The younger they leave, the quicker they lose some of their Brazilian identity. Globalization is in football just as it is in commerce. You end up with a similar style of play in every country – one in which midfielders can run and tackle but can't pass the ball accurately.

Why did you retire at the age of only 26?
Although it's true I was rather ill at ease in the public arena, the decision to retire was made for me by doctors. I suffered a detached retina in 1969 and until the eve of the 1970 World Cup there was a real doubt that I would take part. I got through it in Mexico, but a couple of years later I damaged the eye again. I had to admit my playing days were over.

Describe your relationship with Pele?
We had an instant understanding from the first moment we teamed up in the national team. We instinctively knew what the other had in mind. Pele always will be the number one. He had no weaknesses and made it all seem so simple on the patch.

Which other players in the past 50 years have you most admired?
Cruyff, Beckenbauer, Bobby Charlton, Bobby Moore, Diego Maradona, Platini, Socrates, Zico. From my Brazil team I'd single out Gerson, who apart from being a technically outstanding creative midfielder was a true warrior and leader.

John Holmesdale

● 1970

Santiago Bernabeu, the creator of the great Real Madrid success story of the previous decade, was interviewed in the December 1970 issue by Norman Cutler, who wrote: "'Yes....I played a small part in building the club,' he modestly admits. 'But most credit must go to the players...all of them, down through the years.

"They are always my first consideration...they are the club...without them and their loyalty, success would have been impossible.'"

Also featured for the first time in *World Soccer* were in-depth match reports from every game at the World Cup finals in Mexico, while in the January edition *World Soccer* celebrated Pele's achievement of becoming only the third player in history to score 1,000 goals (in November 1969).

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CARLOS ALBERTO

Santos & Brazil
Captain of Brazil's 1970 World Cup-winning side, who are considered to be the best the tournament has ever seen

ARE YOU HAPPY that you played in your era and not today?
I'm very happy to have played in what was really a great era for football. The game was beautiful; it was also very different from today. We used to play with more passion than they do today. The game was less professional than it is now, which meant it was also more fun. And I can't complain because I had the chance to be involved in many great games and many great events. I'm not the kind of ex-player who spends too much time wondering what it would have been like for me if I'd been a player today. I'm just happy to have played at that time, to have won titles, to have played with the *Selecao* and with a number of great clubs in Brazil and in the USA.

Are players today paid too much?
The commercial side of football has changed. We now have more money, bigger sponsors, and broader media and TV coverage. As the players are the stars of the show, it's right that they receive the biggest part of the money.

What is your fondest memory from your playing days?
The Mexico 1970 World Cup Final against Italy – no doubt about that. If you want me to be even more specific, then it has to be the moment I scored Brazil's fourth goal. Of course the moment that I lifted the Jules Rimet Cup was amazing too, because I was the captain of my country and it was a moment that the whole population could be proud of.

How different was your era from today?
The only thing that has really changed is the physical aspect. The players run more and change position more. In all other aspects, I don't see any changes. The only team I've seen that did things differently was Holland at the 1974 World Cup in Germany. Since then everything looks more or less the same to me. The teams with the more talented players still generally win.

Leaders...with England captain Bobby Moore (right) at the 1970 World Cup

> **"The Holland team of 1974 was an amazing one to watch"**

If you could rerun your career, would you have done anything differently?
No, I wouldn't change a thing. I'm proud to have been the first player in my position to get forward and attack. In my era the full-back only ever marked the winger; I changed the role by starting to attack now and then. Nowadays teams generally have a right midfielder and a right-back, which makes it easier for both players.

What's been the biggest change in football since you stopped playing?
As I said, as far as I can see there hasn't been any great change. The only thing that was a little bit different in the last 40 years was the Holland team at Germany '74. Their "carousel" style of play was amazing to watch and marvellous for the game.

Which players in the past 50 years have you most admired?
Pele, Garrincha, Didi, Jairzinho, Gerson, Rivelino. If you're talking about foreigners then my all-time favourites are Beckenbauer, Cruyff, Bobby Charlton and Eusebio.

Is football better today than in your era?
I wouldn't say it is. But if we think about clubs, especially in Europe, it's hard not to be impressed by teams like Arsenal, Chelsea, Real Madrid and Barcelona, which have lots of foreigners at their squad. It's great to see such great players playing together. But at the same time, it's not good for the national championships. In my era, the leagues were much more even. Lots of teams had four, five or six international players and that made the game better.

Who was the biggest influence on your career?
Nilton Santos. I dreamed of playing like him since I was a boy. I had the pleasure to play against him in 1963 and 1964, when I had just turned professional at Fluminense and he was coming to the end of his career with Botafogo. I never managed to play along side him in the *Selecao* because when I made my debut he had already retired from international football, but years later we became great friends. One thing I remember is when I faced him in the Rio state championship. I was right-back and he was at left-back, so we overlapped a lot on the pitch. I couldn't take my eyes off him. Whenever I had a chance I looked to see what he was doing, so I could learn from him. He was amazing.

Dan Brennan/Joao Drigues

1971

Seventeen months after celebrating Pele's 1,000th goal, *World Soccer* had the bunting out again as the great Brazilian chalked up his 1,000th professional game.

Meanwhile, in the November edition, *World Soccer* highlighted a young 19-year-old from Northern Ireland who had just made a massive impact on everyone in the Nou Camp as his club side Distillery took on the mighty Barcelona in the European Cup-winners Cup. A year previously he was a law student who was playing Gaelic Football.

Colin McAlpin wrote: "Distillery desperately need the money but they are not going to be rushed into giving him away. The club that does get him isn't buying just another youngster likely to make it, they will be getting a ready-made star of great skill and dedication and for whom the big time holds no fear. He is, as Barcelona manager Rinus Michels said after the game, something special. Remember the name...Martin O'Neill."

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FOWSAUG

Franz BECKENBAUER

Bayern Munich & West Germany
"Der Kaiser" is the only man to captain and manage his country to World Cup victory

ARE PLAYERS TODAY paid too much?
Football has become a branch of the entertainment industry. Players can earn a great deal of money and achieve fame almost straightaway. However, I don't begrudge them their good fortune. It's all relative. When I was playing for Bayern in Europe, our win bonus was 10,000 marks and everybody thought it was crazy money.

What is your fondest memory from your playing career?
Taking part in the 1966 World Cup finals in England at the age of just 20 was a real thrill. After all, I'd only made my full international debut the previous autumn. Probably the most satisfying match of my career was our 3-1 victory over England in 1972, a European Championship quarter-final. It was our first-ever victory at Wembley and it was a night when everything fell into place for us. We combined stylishly, were physically strong and took our chances. Gunter Netzer was magnificent in the playmaker role, and six years after our unlucky loss to England in the 1966 World Cup Final we had our revenge.

And your most humiliating experience?
Bayern fans with long memories will remember us losing 7-4 at Kaiserslautern in 1973 after leading 4-1. In my last season at Bayern [1976-77] we had the worst afternoon possible, a 7-0 home defeat to Schalke.

How different was your era from today?
It's night and day. Early in my career semi-professionalism was still in vogue in Germany. For example, in Hamburg the great striker Uwe Seeler used to combine playing with his work as a representative for Adidas, and in my first year in the Bundesliga [1965-66], when I was earning 2,400 marks after tax, I had a part-time job measuring up huge rolls of fabric in a fashion house. You could say we did things differently back then. We'd travel to games in the sleeping car of a train, stay in bed-and-breakfasts rather than five-star hotels and dig into pre-match meals of roast pork and potatoes or fillet steak.

> **"In my first year at Bayern I had a part-time job in a fashion house"**

If you could rerun your career, would you do anything differently?
Certainly not. I enjoyed a life in top-class sport I could not possibly have imagined as a young man. I had so many wonderful experiences in the game, among them captaining West Germany to victory at the 1974 World Cup, winning three Champions Cups with Bayern and serving as coach when the *Nationalmannschaft* became world champions in 1990. I had the honour too of being the president of the 2006 World Cup organising committee. I've travelled all over the world and met some extraordinary people. I wouldn't change a thing. It's normal for careers to have their difficult moments. As a junior at Bayern I used to be awkward and argumentative and came close not to being accepted into the pro ranks.

In the early 1970s you revolutionised the game with your switch from central midfield to an attacking sweeper role. Was it your idea?
Pretty much. I'd noticed how Internazionale full-back Giacinto Facchetti regularly used to get forward to score goals and thought I could do the same from a central defensive position. As a libero I had the whole field in front of me and could step into midfield whenever I saw fit. There was a risk of us being caught on the counter, but it was outweighed by the extra man it gave us in the middle of the park. The concept of the attacking libero suited me down to the ground. As a kid I was a striker and had an attacker's blood.

You figured prominently at Bayern for close to two decades. Was your long-term association with them written in the stars?
Bayern was my destiny. When, at the age of 13, my team 1906 Munich closed its junior team, many of us kids were expected to join the 1860 club, which was founded in my quarter of Munich in Giesing. But in one of my last games for 1906 I was involved in

Champions...receiving the World Cup in 1974, with goalkeeper Sepp Maier (right) looking on

● 1972

Having walked out on football for the first time at the age of 26, nobody knew what the future held for George Best.

In the July 1972 issue of World Soccer, Brian Glanville wrote: "The case of George Best may, as you wish, be regarded as clinical or deplorable. I myself must declare that I admire him greatly as a footballer. like him as a person, and feel the greatest sympathy for him.

"Loneliness, he told me, was at the bottom of it all [his decision to quit]; loneliness which resulted in frenetic and basically unwanted social activity and in heavy drinking.

"But in leaving the world of football, essentially a warm and sympathetic one, surely he was risking the possibility that loneliness would increase rather than diminish?"

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a clash with an opponent from 1860 and because of that I decided to join Bayern instead.

What's been the biggest change in football since you stopped playing?
From a German perspective, our stadia have taken a huge leap forward. Without chauvinism, I think we've the most modern stadium infrastructure in the world. It's something to be extremely proud of and has been a major factor in the ever-increasing attendances in the Bundesliga.

Which players of the past 50 years have you most admired?
Two factors encouraged me to sign for the New York Cosmos back in 1977. The first was an unforgettable helicopter ride over the Big Apple skyline which the Cosmos management treated me to. The second was the chance to play alongside, Pele, who has to rate as the best player of all-time. He had 10 times as much skill as ordinary footballers, was unselfish and was a tremendous team leader. Brazil's World Cup-winning side of 1970 will never be matched and he was at the heart of it.

Is football today better than in your era?
I'm not one to say everything was better in the good old days. For me, the game is not better or worse today, just different. I don't think there's any doubt the game is quicker and more athletic these days; there's not so much space to work in and less time on the ball. Mentalities have evolved. In the 1960s and 70s we always looked to go forward and took the shortest route to goal. Now, it's different. The emphasis is on keeping possession, moving the ball around all the time.

Who were the biggest influences on your career?
I owe a huge debt of gratitude to the late Robert Schwan, who was my personal manager [as well as serving as Bayern Munich general manager] for so many years. He was wise and clever and treated me like a son. I also have to thank Tschik Cajkovski, the coach who gave me my break in the Bayern first-team, picking me for the Bundesliga play-offs in 1965. No, he didn't go in for deep tactical thoughts, but he was warm, passionate and communicative. You wanted to play for him and do well. I've the same respect and admiration for my old national team coach Helmut Schon, a wonderful human being.

Nick Bidwell

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Gerd MULLER

Bayern Munich and West Germany
"Der Bomber", Germany's all-time record goalscorer with 68 in 62 internationals and a 1974 World Cup winner

ARE YOU happy you played in your era and not today?
Totally. I wouldn't swap. Today's professionals may have the money, but we had a far better time.

What is your fondest memory from your playing days?
Scoring the winning goal in the 1974 World Cup Final against Holland was naturally a high point, all the more so since I did it on my home patch in Munich. Funnily enough, I hardly slept a wink the night before the game, whereas my room-mate Franz Beckenbauer was out for the count. I've also great memories of the 1970 finals in Mexico, scoring 10 goals and ending up as the tournament's top scorer. Although we only came third that year, I enjoyed the 1970 finals much more than four years later, when there was a lot of pressure, tension and arguments in our camp.

How different was your era from today?
So much has changed, especially the lot of a striker like myself. The men up front had a far more difficult job in my time. You had some truly tough markers to contend with – guys such as Horst-Dieter Hottges, Sepp Piontek, Willi Schulz, Otto Rehhagel and Ernst Diehl, who'd think nothing of sending you flying. Get past them and there was a libero in the way. The advent of flat back fours gave strikers much more room to operate in. I'd have loved it.

You scored a record 40 Bundesliga goals for Bayern Munich in the 1971-72 season. Are you saying you would be able to top that figure if playing today?
Without a shadow of a doubt.

What was your best-ever goal?
I've always had a soft spot for the first of the two goals I scored in the 4-0 victory over Atletico Madrid in the replay of the 1974 Champions Cup Final. [Jupp] Kapellmann put in a deep cross to the far post and, after controlling the ball, I thumped it home from a very tight angle with my right foot.

Target man...Muller scores the winner against Holland in 1974 World Cup Final

"Even if I was playing badly I always fancied myself to score"

What was the secret of your success as a marksman?
Even if I was playing badly, I always fancied myself to score. It didn't matter to me if a goal was beautiful or ugly, as long as the ball finished in the back of the net.

Is it true you once played in goal in the Bundesliga?
Yes. Early in my career [October 1965] I replaced the injured Sepp Maier for the last quarter-hour of a game in Hamburg. His gloves were way too big for me, but thankfully I didn't concede and we won 4-0.

If you could rerun your career would you have done anything differently?
Absolutely not. I had my fill of trophies and unforgettable moments. In all my pro career I never lost a Final. I won world and European titles with my country, three Champions Cups and several Bundesligas with Bayern, and was seven times the top scorer in the German league. Many people were surprised when I retired immediately after the 1974 World Cup at the age of 28, but I don't have any regrets at all. I had a young daughter and I simply wanted to spend more time with her. Before then I was never home.

What's the biggest change in football since you stopped playing?
The media presence now is something else entirely. In my day there were far fewer reporters and they tended not to seek the sensational. They, for the most part, respected us and off-the-record stuff stayed just that. Many of our games were not even televised and when they were we didn't have all those cameras which miss absolutely nothing. Personally, I think there's much too much football on TV now.

Which player in the past 50 years have you most admired?
Beckenbauer was nothing short of a genius and I don't say that because he was a team-mate for my whole career. He made everything look so easy and wrote the manual for attacking sweepers. He and I could play one-twos blindfold.

Who was the biggest influence on your career?
My first Bayern coach, Tschik Cajkovski, who was a father figure to me.

Is football today better than in your era?
I'm convinced we played with more spontaneity; football was not so much of a science back then. For instance, there was little or no video analysis. Surprise could play its part.

Nick Bidwell

● 1973

As England crashed out of the World Cup qualifiers at home to Poland, Brian Glanville launched a bitter attack on manager Sir Alf Ramsey. Here are some of the highlights:

"A bleak picture. For all the 'new professionalism' of sturdy Sir Alf, his divine ability to get through to the players, his undeniable attention to their needs – he failed as Walter Winterbottom never failed. He failed, that is, to get England through to the finals of a World Cup; and let it be pointed out that it is the only time that he was obliged to try...

"Space forbids me to expand on the question of to what extent Ramsey's negative, wingless, destructive policies have discouraged the emergence of talent in this country, but I do not think we can exonerate him.

"From July, 1966, it has been downhill all the way; and now we are sitting disconsolate as Jack and Jill."

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Teofilo CUBILLAS

Alianza Lima & Peru

His country's greatest player of all time, he helped *La Rojiblanca* to the quarter-finals of the 1970 World Cup

CAN YOU compare your era and the present one?

I played at a time when teams played to win; today they play not to lose. In my era there were up to five forwards, there was more attacking, there were lots of goal chances created, scores were quite high. Today teams play with only one striker and barely create one or two chances in 90 minutes. Football is the loser for a lack of goals. People go to watch football for the emotions that goals generate. They leave matches very sad if it's 0-0. Without the emotion of goals, they might think twice about going to a match the next week.

So, what about Barcelona?

Barcelona are the exception. They play well, they have returned to a previous age, they create lots of chances. People leave happy after their matches, they put on a worthy spectacle. Fans want to say: "I'm going to watch a show." And Real Madrid certainly don't want to get left behind.

What do you think about Jose Mourinho at Real Madrid trying to achieve that?

Mourinho is very intelligent. Portugal wanted him but he was going to put his prestige on the line if he took that job. At Real he has time to build.

At the World Cup in South Africa, Spain, with a fair number of Barcelona players, found it hard to play that same game...

For a national team trainer it's different, it's difficult to build a team when they have the players for so little time. Barcelona's Guardiola has plenty of time with his players to build team harmony.

How would you compare today's players with those in your time?

Players need to enjoy their football, enjoy having the ball. Today, players seem to want to pass unnoticed. If only they all played like Messi who knows what's going to happen before, during and after a move. Before, players were more technical and there were many of them, every team had six or seven players you talked about because they were recognised as good, today you can count them on one hand. At [the World Cup] Mexico 1970, all the teams had seven or eight stars who showed their credentials as leading players. Germany had Beckenbauer, Overath, Muller, Maier; England had Bobby Charlton, Jackie Charlton, Bobby Moore; Uruguay [Roberto] Matosas, [Luis] Cubilla.

Star in stripe...Cubillas takes on the Brazil defence in the 1978 World Cup

"If only they all played like Messi"

How are things different now for coaches?

Before it was very easy for coaches. Now you have to be very well prepared, know about everything: psychology, nourishment, the media, fans, sponsors. You have to surround yourself with specialists in every area – a goalkeeping coach, a physical trainer. Before they did it all. But the only one who probably sleeps calmly is Guardiola. All the others go to bed wondering what they have to do to counter Barcelona.

Are players overpaid now?

No, if clubs pay what they pay players it's because they're worth that. They pay for themselves. Football has progressed like everything else, it didn't get left behind. It's big business now. Everything is within reach. Clubs earn millions and they can invest in whatever they want.

Rex Gowar

● 1974

In the January 1974 issue, Arthur Rotmil reported on the club that made Armenia the soccer capital of the USSR.

He wrote: "Ararat Erevan, a provincial club from the deep south, has completed the coveted league and cup double in Russia. Thus after the Ukrainians, in the shape of Dynamo Kyiv, who broke the monopoly of the leading Moscow clubs in the 60s, now the Armenians have followed suit.

"Ararat hold a remarkable 'jinx' over the Moscow teams. In the last three years, in 13 matches, the Armenians have never been beaten on any of Moscow's grounds! They emerged proudly from all their encounters with Spartak, Dynamo, CSKA, Torpedo and Lokomotiv.

"No wonder that the Russian fans are calling Ararat 'the champions of Moscow'."

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Elias FIGUEROA

Internacional & Chile

Captained his country at three World Cups and is the only man to be voted South American player of the year three times running

ARE YOU HAPPY that you played in your era and not today?
Absolutely. I played in the greatest era of attacking football, when the likes of Pele, Jairzinho and Rivelino were all playing in Brazil. I had the privilege of playing with them every weekend. For me it was even more special as I was a defender who had to pit my wits against these magnificent magicians. I suppose that is why I was voted South American player of the year three years running – in 1974, 1975 and 1976. In 1973, they gave the award to Pele, so I can only be happy to have been given that level of recognition.

Are players today paid too much?
No. They are paid in proportion with what the professional sports market will bear today. Athletes are the modern-day gladiators. They make people proud of their countries. They also bring people together in support of their clubs and countries. Don't forget that a player's career is quite short. It's not the same as that of a doctor, lawyer or other professions.

What is your fondest memory from your playing days?
I scored what is known in Brazil and throughout South America as the "*Gol Iluminado*". It came in the Final of the 1975 Brazilian championship. The city of Porto Alegre was in a frenzy with anticipation. The stadium opened its doors at 11am and by noon it was full – for a game that was due to kick off at six o'clock in the evening! People were camped outside the stadium three days before the match. It was an incredible sight. The atmosphere was unbelievable. Fifteen minutes into the second half, the whole pitch was cast in shade. Nobody knows how, but in precisely the spot I jumped up, a sun ray illuminated me just as I scored the only goal of Internacional's first-ever national championship Final victory. Today, I have a charitable foundation called Gol Iluminado which develops and implements educational programmes through sports initiatives for underprivileged children and their families. And, of course, I am extremely proud to have captained my country, Chile, at three World Cups.

High flyer...Figueroa beats USSR keeper Anzor Kavazashvili in 1966

"A ray of sun lit me as I jumped to score the only goal of the Final"

If you could rerun your career, would you have done anything differently?
Absolutely nothing. Everything that I accomplished took total perseverance, passion and effort. When I was three, I had a tracheotomy as I suffered severely from asthma. The doctors told my mother I would never be a normal child and that I would probably never be able to play any sports. So my first goal was to run like other kids – something I achieved when I was 11-years old. Then I was ill and bed-ridden for a year. But I was mentally strong and worked hard to overcome this obstacle. At 15, I made my debut as a professional footballer. I managed to achieve this through focus and perseverance. This is what I try to pass on to the children at Gol Iluminado: the idea that when you really believe in something you can make it happen.

What's been the biggest change in football since you stopped playing?
The modern communications and the media coverage. It's really incredible nowadays. Thanks to TV and internet, today a game can be watched by the entire planet. In my era, the biggest audience of all time for a Brazilian game was recorded: Internacional v Fluminense in 1975, at the Maracana, with a crowd of 202,000. But today the same game could be watched by billions around the world.

Which players in the past 50 years have you most admired?
Pele, Franz Beckenbauer, Pedro Rocha, Carlos Alberto, Johan Cruyff, Diego Maradona, Teofilo Cubillas, Rivelino. There were also lots of other incredible players in my era who I had the great fortune of playing with or against.

Is football better today than your era?
I'm not the kind of guy who always says my era was better, but today there are less individual stars and personalities. Perhaps football has become more physical and less technical. What stands out for me is that good players don't stay with one team for their whole career. In the past, they identified more closely with a specific team. Pele stayed with Santos. Towards the end of his career he did he move to another club, in the States, but that was to help the development of football.

Who influenced your career the most?
At the beginning it was my father who motivated me and gave me total support. After that, all the coaches I worked with. I tried to take the best from each of them.

Oliver Fowler

1975

Pele made his debut for New York Cosmos in June 1975 but in the August edition of *World Soccer*, Colin Jose questioned the Brazilian's impact on the game in America.

He wrote: "What lasting effect can Pele have on the game in the United States? Certainly, wherever Pele goes attendances will shoot way above the average, but I feel they will revert to their normal level during the weeks when he does not appear. The number of converts to normal NASL fare will be minimal.

"Whatever effect Pele does have on North American soccer will be in the realm of publicity for the game. Through the medium of television he will bring the sheer joy of playing the game to millions of Americans who have spent their lives in left field admiring the sky with a baseball mitt on their left hand."

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Antonin PANENKA

Bohemians, Rapid Wien & Czechoslovakia
A shock European Championship winner and inventor of the "chipped" penalty

WHAT IS YOUR fondest memory as a player?
It has to be winning the European Championship with Czechoslovakia in 1976. No one gave us a prayer in those finals in Yugoslavia, but we had it in us to upset both the Dutch in the semis and the Germans in the Final. Other highlights were helping Rapid Wien to reach the Cup-winners Cup Final in 1985 and playing international football at Wembley and the Maracana.

You became famous in the Final's penalty shoot-out with a softly struck chip into the middle of the goal. Spur-of-the-moment cheek or a party piece you had worked on?
I'd been working on this type of penalty for a couple of years. I used to practise penalties after training at Bohemians with club keeper Zdenek Hruska and soon we began to have a little wager on the outcome. As he usually had the upper hand, I was always looking for ways to get my own back and one day came up with the idea of taking quite a long run-up, feinting to shoot powerfully and gently lifting the ball into the middle of the goal. It worked like a charm. The keeper had always dived by the time the ball was kicked and had no hope of regaining ground. In friendlies and a few league games it never failed, and when the European Championship came around I was determined to go for it if I had the chance. Destiny decided it would arise in the Final. I knew I'd score.

Even today it is known as "a Panenka". How does it feel to be an innovator?
Back then I had no idea of the impact it would have. For me, it was simply an effective way of taking a penalty. But I'm proud of being the father of the idea and that great players like Zidane and Ribery thought it good enough to copy.

Did Czechoslovakia's triumph prove to be a life-changing moment for the team?
Not exactly. The communist system was still in place in our country. We had the glory and a huge sense of pride, but there could be no economic benefits, no fat advertising contracts, no spin-offs. At the time players were not allowed to move abroad, so we just got on with it.

Chip and in...Panenka's cheeky spot-kick wins Euro 76 for Czechoslovakia

> **"I was set on going for it if I got the chance. Destiny decided it would arise in the Final. I knew I'd score"**

What was a footballer's lot in communist Czechoslovakia?
Well, we were professional in all but name, we didn't have another job. Training was very intense and everything was based on the collective. Physically it was tough and often we didn't see the ball. So much was forbidden. No smoking, no drinking, no sex before a game. Even in my last year at Bohemians I was fined heavily for having a beer after a game. I earned between 3,000 and 3,500 crowns while the man in the factory would have 2,000 in his pay packet. Of course, the end of communism brought total change to the game: the Czech Republic and Slovakia becoming two nations, the rise and fall of so many clubs, talent leaving for foreign clubs at increasingly younger ages and so on.

If you could turn back the clock, would you have done anything differently?
To today's generation of players it must seem strange. I was a European champion and yet I spent 23 years with the same Prague club [Bohemians] and was only given the green light to move abroad to Rapid Wien at the age of 32. I didn't get to play in a big European league, but I thoroughly enjoyed my time. Bohemians were only Prague's third club but had a lot going for them. We were known for our attractive, technical football, the club had a family atmosphere and even fans of other teams had a soft spot for us. I was a skilful attacking midfielder and saw it as my duty to entertain. Fans need cheering up after a hard week of work and I loved to please them with my tricks. The most important thing I got out of football was the special relationship I had with fans at Bohemians and in Austria.

Is football today better than in your era?
Not for me. Nowadays it is quicker, more aggressive and there's too many man-on-man challenges. In my day a team would be made up of nine men who could do creative things with the ball, plus two middle-distance runners to do the donkey work. Today it's two technically-gifted players and the rest who are on the field for athleticism and strength alone. Without names on their shirts there would be no way of distinguishing them. I don't know how I would fit in today. I wasn't strong, good in the air or quick. They used to say I only moved sharply when the cashier came with our pay! The terms and conditions of players have improved so much but I'm not at all envious. I was just happy to be paid for playing the game I loved. Maybe today's crop should be jealous of me. I was, after all, a European champion and had a more romantic football life.

Nick Bidwell

● 1976

After a gap of 27 years, when the great Torino title-winning side of the 1940s was wiped out in the famous Superga air disaster, Keir Radnedge reported on the Italian side's long overdue success.

In the January 1974 issue, he wrote: "The phoenix has finally made it. In 1949 their last championship-winning team were wiped out at Superga, but at last Torino have risen from the ashes to recapture that crown and make a start on banishing the ghosts of a glorious past.

"For those past 27 years the fans have dreamed of a return to the very pinnacle of Calcio.

They have had Cup successes in 1968 and 1971, but the Cup is nothing in Italy. It's the league which matters, and without reclaiming the *scudetto* they once held five seasons in a row, Torino could never claim to have completed the recovery."

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Zbigniew BONIEK

Juventus & Poland

In an era when it was rare for East Europe players to move abroad, he left his homeland and enjoyed great success in Italy

HOW DO YOU look back on your playing career?
I stopped playing football more that 20 years ago but it seems that it was yesterday. Unfortunately it wasn't, but I feel fulfilled as a player. And I am happy that I had such a career. I decided independently when and why I should stop playing football, nobody forced me to do this. With my Polish team, Widzew Lodz, I won two titles in the domestic league. Then, I played for Juventus, one of the best teams in the world. And please remember that it was during a period when the movement of foreign players from one country to another was very limited. Apart from that I finished third with Poland in the World Cup in Spain in 1982. So, I feel a really fulfilled player.

You were known as a player with a strong character. It helped you a lot in your career, but as a teenager you had a serious conflict with a boss at your first club, Zawisza Bydgoszcz and you had to move...
You need more than a strong character to play football well, but such things can only help you. In my time, every footballer was the same as me – he had a very hard character. The players had no public relations specialists around them, people who could concentrate on their image and marketing. They were strong men in good health, who were not afraid of anybody and fought to win on the field. It was typical and natural. I always had great respect for everybody, so if somebody respected me I was three times more pleasant to him. But if somebody did not respect me, I was six times more unpleasant...

You played football during the communist period in Poland. Did the country's leaders use footballers in a special way?
We had a deep kind of communism in Poland. Football was one element of the propaganda for the country's leaders. Yet the players did not really realise it. The communists wanted all kinds of success and we could guarantee them it in a very straight way, so we were treated in a special way, we were privileged. For example, you could not simply buy a car, you had to have a special coupon. So when I scored many goals, I would receive such a coupon from a local communist party leader and got to drive a car. Maybe it is difficult to understand for people in western Europe who have never lived under communist regimes. But, on the other hand, I know that a few of them have leftist opinions, but rightist wallets.

> **In my day, players looked like middle-distance runners; now they are all muscles, muscles,**

Were you worried about moving from Poland to Italy? It seemed to be the biggest risk of you career...
Sorry, but I cannot agree with you. When I joined Juve I had almost 60 caps for Poland and was a player who took part in the most important football events. I knew western Europe quite well. Of course, I had to change from a communist reality into an Italian one which was totally different, but I was prepared for everything.

You were nicknamed "*Bello di notte*" [beauty at night] because your best performances came in evening matches in European competition. Did you like it?
It did not irritate me. When I moved to Juve they strongly wanted to gain European trophies. I played in four European Finals, winning three of them. We scored five goals during these games. Three of them were mine plus one penalty thanks to a foul on me, so it is not strange that I was called "*Bello di notte*". There was a real base for such a nickname.

You finished you career at 32. Was that not too early?
No. As an 18-year-old I started to play at the highest level. I never had a real serious injury. It meant that I played football on the highest level for 14 years. During my time clubs did not have as many players as today and coaches did not change the starting XI week after week. So we played in every game from the beginning of August till the end of June, the whole season. And because of that, player's body exploitation was totally different.

How is today's game different?
There have been so many changes. Today's is a "shorter" game. There is no defensive libero, who played behind a defensive line. And now there is only 30 metres between defence and attack. It means that it is considerably tighter on the field and much more difficult to play. Games are not as beautiful as during my period. We could run with a ball for 30 metres and had more one-on-one situations. Take a look at contemporary players to see how much football has changed. My generation looked like athletes – middle or long-distance runners. Today's generation have muscles, muscles, muscles. They look like sprinters and this should not come as a surprise. The most important thing for them is accelerate and stop, accelerate and stop.

Your very good friend and former Juventus team-mate Michel Platini is trying to change European football to give more room to Eastern teams in the Champions League. Is that a good idea?
It is natural that the richest European countries have stronger teams. Michel tries only to bring a new dimension into European football. But we can be sure that, ultimately, the best teams will win. It is obvious. Michel is doing a good job. And I know that he is enjoying it very much. In my opinion he is the best UEFA president we have had for many years.

Dariusz Kurowski

● 1977

Arthur Rotmil suggested that Kevin Keegan's transfer from Liverpool to Hamburg, may be a big mistake.

He wrote: "Into this loaded atmosphere now steps Kevin Keegan, a young man uprooted from his country and way of life, but most of all from the 'homey' circle at Anfield Road, where Bill Shankly and Bob Paisley carried on in a simple, friendly, almost fatherly, but effective manner.

"Keegan will soon find out that Dr. (Peter) Krohn (Hamburger owner) and Rudi Gutendorf (manager), not to mention the fans, are only interested in success and will not tolerate human failings.

"Worse still, he may find that several players will resent his arrival. Keegan will not find it easy settling down to playing with Hamburg."

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Mario KEMPES

Valencia & Argentina
A World Cup winner in 1978 and one of South America's greatest goalscorers

ARE YOU happy to have played during your era and not today?
I think you always have to respect the eras, you have to make the most of your time and I think I did so very well. Maybe I could have played in this era, that's also true, but one will never know.

Are today's players paid too much or are they well remunerated?
I think the pay is right. Everyone fights for what's theirs and if the clubs want to give them that it's the directors' problem. But the footballer has always been like an exchange currency, as if he were a cow. He was sent anywhere and others kept the money, but nowadays they have become more powerful.

What is your best memory as a player?
There were many good ones and there were some of the other kind but you always recall the good ones because you enjoyed them, you felt them. But there were bad ones which when you talk of the good times a bad one comes to mind.

What about your memories of the World Cup in Argentina?
That was one of the biggest titles I won. I was also champion with River Plate, with Valencia in the Spanish Cup, Cup-winners Cup and Super Cup, but the one that stands out is the World Cup.

Was your era very different to today's?
Nowadays football is more dynamic, you don't see such skilled players – there's a lot of speed, a lot of friction. Before it was different. We didn't play slowly but it was perhaps more showy.

Is there anything in your career you would change?
I never wanted that, nor do I, nor will I. What I was able to do in my time, thank God, I was able to because I chose this profession of football which is so good. I travelled most of the world thanks to football and I have lots of friends in all parts of the world.

Hero...Kempes scores against Holland in the 1978 World Cup Final

> **We didn't play slowly, but it was perhaps more showy**

What notable changes have you seen in football since you retired?
The changes have come with the gradual advances in technology. Today we're sitting here watching Argentinian, Spanish, Italian football. Technology has made it possible not to get left behind. If we need to know something we don't need to make a phone call to someone to ask what happened; today we're in the know of everything.

Which players have you admired?
My idol was Pele, then there's Diego Maradona, Alfredo Di Stefano, Johan Cruyff, [Marco] Van Basten.

In Argentina, a lot of people say Maradona was greater than Pele. Where do you put Pele in comparison to Maradona?
Maradona was just a boy when Pele was practically ending [his career]. Each one to his era; you can't make comparisons after 15, 20 or 30 years.

Is football better now than in your era?
It's still football, 11 against 11, the same ball, refereeing controversies. I think football is a passion. There will always be those who want to impose extra artefacts to what is the perimeter of the pitch to know if it was a goal, if it wasn't, if the ball went out or not. I think football is all about that: arguments throughout the week on what happened on Sunday. If not, it wouldn't be football.

Who had the biggest influence on your career?
My parents helped me a lot. I had lots of coaches who supported me and, above all, lots of team-mates which I lived and played with who were a spectacular help.

Rex Gowar

● 1978

Six months before the start of the 1978 World Cup, Argentina boss Cesar Luis Menotti spoke to *World Soccer*'s Eric Weil about his hopes for success: "'We can't go into this World Cup with tactics which are played by most of our league clubs....high passes into the goalmouth in the hope that somebody will head them in....everybody defend and hope a fast counter attack will catch the opposition unaware," Menotti said. "I don't want this to be the image of Argentine soccer. I would like to destroy old theories that are no longer of any use.

"I would like to show that we can win by playing good attacking soccer."

Elsewhere, West Bromwich Albion embarked on a pre-season tour of communist China. Former Arsenal boss Bertie Mee accompanied the Baggies and told Keir Radnedge: "There was no atmosphere at all at the matches. People applauded but that was all. If they started getting too noisy there was a loudspeaker announcement asking them to keep quiet."

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Dino ZOFF

Juventus & Italy
One of the greatest goalkeepers of all time and the oldest winner of the World Cup

HOW DO YOU see the future of football?
Football is unsinkable. All sorts of things happen but football remains a game that inflames the passions of lots of people, it remains a game that comes naturally to a child. You give a child a ball and he will kick it; there's nothing more natural in all the world. Football is really a simple game but a complete game. Of course, in today's world it has become more of a huge spectacle than a sport. Television, like it or not, has promoted football enormously, it has shown the game to millions worldwide and that, by and large, is a good thing.

What changes would you like to introduce to the world game?
I would like to see the introduction of a certain amount of technology, but in a limited way. For example, some sort of goal-line technology could be a good thing, but if you introduce too much you devalue the whole nature of the game. Rugby seems to me to have got it right because they use the technology only when the game has come to a natural stop. At the end of the day though, the referee has to remain the final arbiter. Technology can only be used in a very limited way and I say this because, even if I trust the technology, I might have my doubts about those who are using it.

What was your best moment during your career?
Obviously for me, the greatest moment came with winning the World Cup in 1982. The whole way that tournament went, our initial difficulties, our problems with the press, the fact that I was 40, and then in the end we overcame all and won out. It was remarkable and unforgettable.

How do you see the future for Italian football?

Leader...Zoff is one of only three goalkeepers – along with Gianpiero Combi and Iker Casillas – to captain a World Cup-winning side

"We built mega-galatic stadia and now they are no good"

There's no doubt that this is a difficult moment for Italian football. Lots of clubs simply have no cash, apart from those obvious ones which are owned by wealthy entrepreneurs – and I'm talking about Inter, Milan and Juventus. For lots of other clubs, even if TV-rights money makes a big contribution, they still have huge shortfalls. Spectator numbers are in decline and the clubs themselves do not seem to be run along the same commercially successful lines as, say, English Premier League clubs, which seem to make the most of merchandising, endorsements, etc. One change I would make in Italy would be to renew our stadia which have all fallen badly behind. We built a whole series of mega-galatic stadia for the 1990 World Cup and now they are no good to us.

You played with and against some wonderful players, but is there anyone around today who really excites you?
If I had to pick out a player on the contemporary scene it would have to be Lionel Messi. He's the player who does the most extraordinary things, the way he has begun this season is quite remarkable. He is simply the best around.

Paddy Agnew

● 1979

Keir Radnedge first wrote of a football icon who was born in October 1960, the same month that *World Soccer* launched.

He reported: "The boys of Argentinos Juniors were coming off the pitch after being narrowly beaten in the youth championship final by Pinto de Santiago [six years ago]. There were many tears. In the midst of the pandemonium, one of the Pinto players put his arm around the shoulders of an opponent and told him: 'You've got nothing to cry for. One day you'll be the best No10 in the world.'

"That day has just about arrived for Diego Maradona. He has just exploded on Europe with his devastating displays against Holland and Scotland on Argentina's recent tour. Yet he is still only 18. The way in which he took Johan Neeskens apart in the World Cup Final 'repeat', then the way in which he bewildered Scotland, underlined that this is the man to guide Argentina towards retaining the World Cup."

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Karl-Heinz RUMMENIGGE

Bayern Munich & West Germany
Prolific goalscorer for club and country, he is now chief executive of Germany's biggest club

ARE YOU HAPPY that you played in your era and not today?
First of all I'd say the current era is a great time to play in. Football has never had such a high profile, interest is massive and the remuneration for professional players is excellent. But why would I want to jump into a time machine when I had such a wonderful career in the 1970s and 80s? I achieved more than I could dream of: winning trophies with West Germany and Bayern, captaining my country, being voted European Player of the Year, several times finishing as top scorer in the Bundesliga. Special times.

Are players today paid too much?
I take care not to compare different eras. It's a tricky business, not always very helpful. At Bayern I was earning 8,000 marks a month, which at that time was fantastic, the sort of money my father could never have made as a toolmaker. Wearing my chief executive's hat, I've nothing against paying high salaries to the superstars. Such investment can bring substantial returns in sponsorship, gate receipts and TV contracts. The Cristiano Ronaldos, Robbens and Riberys are the exceptions, though. We can't push the boat out as far for the rest.

What is your fondest playing memory?
Being part of West Germany's European Championship-winning side in Italy in 1980. It was my only international title, so of course I've great affection for that tournament. And I'll never forget the 1976 Champions Cup Final when Bayern beat Saint-Etienne 1-0 in Glasgow. We were champions for the third year running and it was all the sweeter for me because the previous year I thought I'd be playing in the Final against Leeds United, only to be left out. Two goals in a win at Wembley against England also come to mind.

Euro kings...Rummenigge (right) and Udo Horsmann in 1976

"I came on as a last throw of the dice against France. Without a DIY ice pack I wouldn't have got on at all"

What, for you, was the most exciting game?
Our victory over France in the 1982 World Cup semi-final in Seville was one of the all-time thrillers. It had everything: flowing football, drama, controversy, so many twists. We should have lost. Deep into extra-time France deservedly led 3-1 and a team with not so much belief as us would have given up the ghost. But I managed to pull a goal back, Horst Hrubesch equalised and we won on penalties. I shouldn't have played really. Because of a hamstring injury I was on the bench and only came on as a last throw of the dice in extra time. Without a DIY ice pack – a goalkeeper's glove full of ice – I wouldn't have got on at all.

If you could rerun your career would you have done anything differently?
I probably could have finished better in Bayern's defeat by Aston Villa in the Final of the 1982 Champions Cup. I'd have loved to have been fully fit for the World Cup Finals we lost in 1982 and 1986. Unfortunately it wasn't the case.

Do you have a favourite goal?
The one I scored in the Bundesliga against Bochum in the 1980-81 season. A cross was deflected to me on the edge of the box and with three or four defenders around I juggled with the ball before scoring with a scissor-kick. It was just instincts taking over.

How different was your era from today?
At the beginning of my career at Bayern the squad hierarchy was highly defined. Franz Beckenbauer would be at the top, then Paul Breitner, Sepp Maier, Gerd Muller and Uli Hoeness, followed by the rest of us. I was right at the bottom. It is not so rigid now. Youngsters were once very wary in the pro dressing room. Now they are more assertive and confident.

What's been the biggest change in football since you stopped playing?
The creation of the Champions League. Commercially it has been a big step forward and the regular diet of Real Madrid versus Milan and Bayern against Manchester United has to be good for the fans.

Which players in the past 50 years have you most admired?
I've always appreciated the elegance of Brazilians, whether it be Pele, Jairzinho, Rivelino, Socrates or Zico. Also Platini, Maradona, Cruyff, Keegan, Beckenbauer, Gerd Muller and Breitner.

Who was your biggest influence as a player?
He kept ringing me at home to make sure I hadn't gone out for the night, but I've a lot to thank my old Bayern coach Dettmar Cramer for. He fully believed in me and established me in the team. General manager Uli Hoeness was very important too. In the face of a lot of resistance he brought Breitner back and Paul's creativity was one of the main reasons I scored so often.

Nick Bidwell

● 1980

In the October edition, Keir Radnedge reviewed the first 20 years of *World Soccer*. In concluding, he remarked:
"In 20 years *World Soccer*, and football, have come a long way.
"Yet just as *World Soccer* was originally carried into existence very much on the excitement generated by Real Madrid – the subject for the club furus in October 1960 – so now perhaps the game hasn't come all that far.
"Alfredo Di Stefano is still winning European prizes, from the Champions Cup as a 1960 player to the Cup-winners Cup as a 1980 coach (with Valencia); and Eintracht Frankfurt, Champions Cup runners-up in 1960, ended their long quest for a European crown only this very year, 1980, winning the UEFA Cup."

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Grzegorz LATO

Stal Mielec & Poland

His country's most-capped player and the only Pole to win the Golden Boot at the World Cup

ARE YOU HAPPY that you played in your era and not today?
I was a successful player and I am very happy about that. I played during the period when the Polish national team finished third at two World Cups, in 1974 and 1982. We won the gold and silver Olympic medals, in 1972 and 1976, as well, so I don't want to change anything in my career.

How do you explain why Poland, with you in the team, were so successful between 1972 and 1982 – the "golden decade"?
The biggest contributor was coach Kazimierz Gorski, a great personality who respected everybody and had a very easy football philosophy. His decisions were always very accurate. He selected the perfect squad, with two equal players for each position. Before taking charge of Poland, he was a coach of the under-21s and there he found such players as Tomaszewski, Gorgon, Musial, Szarmach, Kmiecik, Kusto and me. Then he added a few older players like Deyna, Gadocha, Kasperczak, Maszczyk and Domarski. In this way he prepared an excellent, explosive mix of experienced and young players. The team confirmed their potential in 1972 at the Olympic games in Munich, and then again, a year later, during the qualification campaign for the 1974 World Cup, with two famous games against England: a 2-0 victory at home in Chorzow and then a 1-1 draw at Wembley.

Do you remember how much you were paid after finished third in the 1974 World Cup?
We received 3,000 US dollars and 190,000 Polish zloty. Maybe not much compared with Western reality, but you must remember that a good salary in Poland at that time was 25 dollars.

Do you think that players today are paid too much?
I do not envy present-day players and their very high salaries at all! We must realise one thing: football is now a more commercial sport, with huge involvement of the television and marketing sectors. And it is logical that, if clubs have such money, they can pay their players better.

> **"Each team is analysed in detail today, everyone knows about each other"**

What is your greatest memory from your playing days?
I remember in a very warm way the World Cup finals. I played a total of 20 games and scored 10 goals at three tournaments. The World Cup is the most important event for any player – especially when his team play very well, like Poland in 1974 and 1982. My personal success was winning the goalscorer title in 1974. My name was registered in the history of Polish and world football for ever.

Do you see big changes in contemporary football since you stopped playing?
Now football is much faster than during my era. I remember that we could pass a ball to the goalkeeper; he could catch it without any problem and then give it back to the defenders. Now a ball moves much faster between players, who need to be more versatile. Today many more goals are scored by defenders and midfielders, especially from free-kicks and corners. And we can see an unbelievable change of positions on the field. On the other hand, new technologies have allowed new models of ball which are not sewed together but stuck. These make games much faster as well. And another important difference: football is more aggressive today. There's so much video analysis, too. Each team is analysed in detail by the rivals before every game, so it is very difficult to surprise your opponents. Everyone knows everything about everybody.

On target...Lato scores against Haiti in the 1974 World Cup

If you could rerun your career, would you have done anything differently?
No, I do not want to change anything. I only felt a disappointment after one game. In the 1974 World Cup we faced West Germany in Frankfurt in a decisive game to decide who would play in the Final. After very heavy rain, the pitch was so bad that we were practically playing water polo! We could not show our normal style and we lost 1-0. I think that today such a game would be postponed. What would have happened on a dry pitch? Now, we can only speculate.

Which players in the past 50 years have you most admired?
I have three favourites: Johan Cruyff, Franz Beckenbauer and Pele. But I especially admire Cruyff. He had fantastic technical skills and playing vision on the field. He could conduct the team during the game in an absolutely perfect way.

Do you think that football is better today than in your era?
For sure, it is better to watch games today. There are so many attractive games in the UEFA Champions League and Euro qualifiers. I get impatient waiting for them.

Dariusz Kurowski

● 1981

Diego Maradona signed for Boca Juniors. In the April 1981 edition of World Soccer, Eric Weil wrote: "While details of Boca Juniors agreement with Maradona were not published, it appeared the player would receive a good two million dollars from the club during the 16 months: $600,000 as a signing on fee and another $500,000 four months later; a monthly salary of $60,000; $10,000 for every friendly match he plays inside the country; 20 per cent of the club's fee for friendlies abroad; and the same bonuses as other first-team players in league matches – $700 a point while Boca Juniors are in the first two places, $150 a point if they are lower.

"This means that Maradona would cost Boca Juniors around eight million dollars in those 16 months which, even if he plays some 100 matches (including friendlies), works out at around $80,000 a match."

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Paolo ROSSI

Juventus, Milan & Italy

Prolific striker who shrugged off a betting-scandal ban to become the star of the 1982 World Cup

ARE YOU HAPPY that you played in your era and not today?
I am happy that I played in my era, but I'd be happier if I was playing today. The huge wages, new rules and the fact that, for a striker, scoring goals today is far easier than in the past, all makes it more appealing. But I'm happy with what I achieved in my career, I cannot complain really. It's funny, I still get recognised all over the world and in Brazil, even today, I cannot take a taxi – I cannot find a driver who is willing to take me!

Are players today paid too much?
It depends on what you mean by "too much". Nobody holds a gun to the temple of club presidents making them sign off certain contracts, salaries or fees. If a great champion earns a lot – "too much" money if you want to call it that – it is because he also creates a lot of money. The problem, if anything, is when awful players earn too much. That's a mistake, but that's business too, of course.

What is your fondest memory from your playing days?
It would be too easy to say the 1982 World Cup in Spain. I scored six goals and won the world title by being top scorer in the tournament. I won the *France Football* Golden Ball that year after I'd been banned for two seasons for something I had never done [in the Italian Serie A match-fixing scandal of 1980). Instead, I choose my debut in Serie A, an amazing feeling that I will never forget; my childhood dream had become reality. Then, of course, victories, success and so on, but first of all I'll never forget that day, which gave me pure adrenaline feelings.

Tell us about that debut...
I always dreamed I'd be a footballer, but that dream looked broken when I had three operations on my meniscus between the ages of 16 and 19. So it was only when I made my Serie A debut, on November 9, 1975, I realised that I had fulfilled my dream – I was a professional player. I remember it as if it were yesterday. I played for Como and we lost 2-0 to Perugia, the club where I later played for three years.

> **"I was young, naive but no one will even return the two seasons I sat out the game. I was lucky however, because destiny repaid me with higher reward"**

How different was your era from today?
Very, very different, but it is also difficult to explain it. For us, for players of my generation, a football match was, in the true sense of the word, entertainment first and foremost. Of course, it was also a job for us but today it is a business first. Players are not just footballers, they are public figures. They are multi-national stars, and with all that comes responsibility. This isn't my opinion or a nostalgic criticism, it is a fact. And I do not mean it as something that's entirely negative either. Nowadays there is much more professionalism, more attention paid to the health of the athlete, to their nutrition and high-performance fluids, to the science of training. In return, the modern-day guys play too many games, too often. Also, in general, there is less attention paid to the skills of younger players in the academies, where too many youth-skill instructors have disappeared. When I was a boy, during a training session we spent hours passing the ball against the wall to refine our individual technique, right foot, left foot, and so on... Today, who would do that with them? Today there is no time, they "have" to win.

Is football better today than your era?
No, not really. I would say that every football era belongs to its own time, but this applies in all areas of life, not just in football. It's trivial to say, but there are positive aspects of my era that have been lost and negative things from my age that have been improved dramatically. Today there is much more tactical organisation, better physical training, we see football that is much more "intense" and faster, but I feel there's also less passion for the game, it has become less genuine. The players are more distant from the ordinary people – and I do not mean just because of their huge salaries, but for a general unwillingness to meet with fans. Human contact in football is increasingly becoming a rarity.

If you could rerun your career, would you have done anything differently?
No, I don't think I would change anything. I've never liked this question because it is impossible to verify. Sure, I would have liked not to have sat out two years of my career because I was innocent. I was young and naive, but no one will ever return those two seasons to me. I was lucky, however, as destiny repaid me with higher reward.

What's been the biggest change you've found since you stopped playing?
As with all players who reach a certain level, readjusting to a life away from the spotlight, beginning a new profession; in short, living a "normal" life is a huge change. I was 31 when I ended my football career and it wasn't easy. My strength was my family, as I began a new job as an entrepreneur [selling Tuscany wine and olive oil] away from football. I was not cut out for managing or having a front-office career at a club and I did not want to travel too much either, so leaving football was the right choice at the time. I have found it again now as a TV pundit – football that is – and, thanks to Italian Sky Sports, I still have the opportunity to have fun while I work.

Which players in the past 50 years have you most admired?

1982

In 1982, *World Soccer* launched its prestigious end of year awards. In the year that Italy won the World Cup, Paolo Rossi was voted Player of the Year and Enzo Bearzot Manager of the Year. Brazil pipped Italy to a clean sweep by claiming the Team of the Year award.

It was reported: "The story of Paolo Rossi comes straight out of football fiction. If you read it in a novel you'd throw it away as absurdly fanciful. Life doesn't work that way.

"Banned for two years in the Italian match-fixing scandal, Rossi returned to action at the tail end of the league season, almost immediately became league champion with Juventus, then picked up the pieces of his international career to such effect that he finished as top scorer in the World Cup finals.

"He scored six goals in Spain – including a hat-trick against Brazil and the opening goal in the Final – to complete one of football's most staggering fairy tales."

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Oh, there are so many, but Maradona, Platini and Zico were really a world apart. It is not a manner of speaking, but the naked truth. Then there were many others. I think of Falcao, Karl-Heinz Rummenigge, my former Juventus team-mates Zbigniew Boniek and Marco Tardelli, and in the national team, Bruno Conti – but those first three were real geniuses of football; unparalleled footballing geniuses.

Who was the biggest influence on your career?
Well, there are many, but two people in particular I cannot fail to mention. Italo Allodi, the general manager who discovered me when I was 15 in a team of amateurs in Florence and brought me to Juventus for 12m lira in 1973, and then sent me on loan to Como to learn my trade. Giovan Battista Fabbri is another huge influence, he was the coach at Vicenza who transformed me from a right winger to a striker. He changed my career and my life.

What's your best game you can remember?
That's too easy. It's the 3-2 win over Brazil in the 1982 World Cup in Spain. My three goals were my first in a tournament where only my manager Enzo Bearzot and my team-mates believed in me after a two-season ban and my poor start in that World Cup. *I Made Brazil Cry* is the title of my autobiography. It's true, it really happened.

Who was the best players of your generation?
Michel Platini for his intelligence on and off the pitch, Diego Armando Maradona for his superior talent and Zico for his humility, which is a rare quality for a superstar of that calibre. They played to win, they played for their team-mates and they played for the people before themselves. All three were superstars in the fullest sense of the term.

What do you miss from the old days?
I don't miss popularity, nor fame or anything like that, but the pure joy of playing, the memories of those years and those games. And I especially miss being young. I do not say it with bitterness though, we all have to grow older, it's life.

Christian Giordano

Date with destiny...Rossi leaves Junior trailing in his wake during Italy's epic 1982 World Cup second-stage game against Brazil

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Michel PLATINI

Saint-Etienne, Juventus & France
A European champion for club and country, twice *World Soccer* Player of the Year and now the current UEFA president

ARE YOU happy that you played in your era and not today?
Yes, I'm very happy that I played in my era. It would be more complicated nowadays. Today, for example, you leave your home as a 14-year-old without knowing anything about your future. It's not as it used to be in my day.

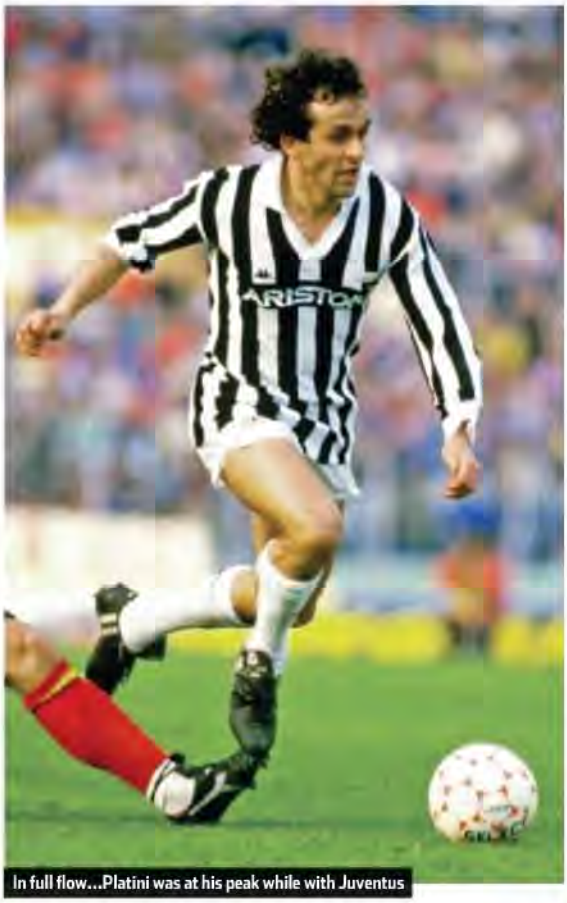
How different was your era from today?
Football then belonged to the players. The game was our passion and we didn't really care about becoming professional. Today young players want to become professionals even before playing football.

Is football better today than in your era?
Many more people play football and train hard in today's era. They can also take advantage of more development programmes than we had in our time. The game is not better now than before. Football is a never-ending story, you should not compare between eras; each player has his own time. It is more physical now because they put athletes on who are physical; before, they put people out who could play football. Football is a question of skill and technique, not of athletics.

If you could rerun your career, would you have done anything differently?
No.

What is your fondest memory from your playing days?
Looking back I would say that it is my whole career, because I've done everything I wanted, played for the clubs I wanted to and always left at the right time.

Is it true that you had an offer to move to England?
Yes. I had offers from Tottenham Hotspur and Arsenal – Spurs and the Gunners! And as I did not want to choose between two English clubs I went to Italy, where it was also warmer! Joking apart, the real reason why I went to Italy is that I did not want to play during the winter break, when you traditionally play a lot of football matches in England.


In full flow...Platini was at his peak while with Juventus

> **"All the World Cup teams played like Europeans"**

What has been the biggest change in football since you stopped playing?
The huge amount of money coming in from TV rights. I also think that football now belongs more to team managers and club presidents than the players.

Which players in the past 50 years have you most admired?
I've admired many players throughout the years and generations. But my idol, the player I admired most, was Johan Cruyff.

Who was the biggest influence on your career?
My father, Aldo.

Are players today paid too much?
No. If clubs don't have enough money to pay high salaries, they should pay less. If they do have enough money, I don't mind if they pay a lot to their key players. My only concern is that clubs live within their means.

What do you make of the quality of football at the World Cup?
Well, I was pleased that European teams came first, second and third. That's the first time that has happened outside of Europe. But the football was too standardised. They are all really playing like Europeans: the South Americans play in Europe, the Africans do, and they have European coaches. In the past there was a difference between African, European and South American teams. Now all the players are playing in Europe and everybody is playing the same.

Is that a bad thing?
I'm not saying it's not good – but it is the same.

So what made the difference for those teams that were successful?
Those who won at the World Cup are working hard in the area of training, grass roots and young players: Spain, Holland and Germany. They organise the most youth competitions, especially at Under-19 level. Training really pays in the end; the best thing you can do in football is teach young players.

Gavin Hamilton

● 1983

Five years before they would claim their country's first and only major international trophy, *World Soccer* profiled the likes of an 18-year-old Marco Van Basten, Ruud Gullit (20), Ronald Koeman (19), Frank Rijkaard (20) and others who would make up the Holland team that went on to win the European Championship in West Germany.

In the March 1983 issue, Cian O'Mahoney wrote: "Ruud Gullit: drifts in and out of the game, lacks aggression, but very gifted.

"Ronald Koeman: plays with a steady concentration unusual for one of his years.

"Frank Rijkaard: has beautiful laconic ball control, full of silken touches. A possible Dutch libero of the future.

"Marco Van Basten: if he fulfils his potential could indeed be the biggest thing to happen to Dutch football since Cruyff."

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ZICO

Flamego, Udinese & Brazil
Considered by many to be the best player never to have won the World Cup

WHAT WERE your expectations for the 2010 World Cup and were they different from the realities?
I expected Brazil to reach the Final and to win a record sixth World Cup. Unfortunately that did not happen. But some of my predictions came true about Spain. I hoped to see them in the Final against us.

But why Brazil and Spain?
Because during the last two to three years they were the teams that had played the most impressive football. That's why their successes were natural. Brazil won the Copa America and the Confederations Cup, and Spain became European champions.

What do you make of the new world champions?
After the 2006 World Cup in Germany, the Spaniards built a very efficient team, with most of the players from Barcelona. They can play with each other even with their eyes closed. If you add the bullet-proof keeper Iker Casillas and defender Sergio Ramos from Real Madrid, as well as Fernando Torres from Liverpool – although he was injured – this is a solid foundation. Also I have a profound respect for the excellent work at first of Luis Aragones and later of Vicente Del Bosque, who has made only cosmetic changes to the team but they still have his hallmark. Although they lost their first game they recovered very quickly. Spain always go to tournaments with big ambitions; this time they were rewarded for their patience.

Why did Brazil lose against Holland?
Maybe because after the first half the players decided the game was over. After the stupid own goal they lost control of the game mentally and couldn't regain the initiative. Some of the players lost their nerve and that is not a good sign.

Brazilian magic...Zico hails a goal against New Zealand at the 1982 World Cup

"In Italy I thought the rough play was anti-football. Some even called me a coward"

Maybe because Kaka couldn't play the role of the new Zico...
No, no, I don't like such comparisons. Every player has his time. These are different periods of football.

But everybody said you were the new Pele...
There is one Pele only! Pele is the greatest player of all time. He is incomparable and unattainable. Any comparisons with him are impossible. He was a phenomenon and my idol. I prefer people to know me as Zico.

At the 1982 World Cup Brazil played amazing football and the world expected you to be champions but it didn't happen...
Unfortunately the best team doesn't always win. But we were proud of our football and people said Brazil were the moral victors. If we had overcome the Italians, maybe we would have been world champions. But that day they had Paolo Rossi, who was magnificent, and he alone decided the game with his hat-trick.

You went to play in Italy at Udinese, where you were treated like a king...
Yes, but the expectations of the people were too big. The team had a potential but not like great squads as Juventus, Milan and Inter. So the hopes and the realities were totally different. But in Italy, it was always very difficult for forwards against the uncompromising defenders. I was disappointed with the rough play, which is anti-football. Some people even called me a coward, but my goals showed otherwise.

You remain the biggest idol of Flamengo fans. What does the club mean to you?
At Flamengo I developed as a player and spent most of my career there. I reached my peak when I won the Libertadores Cup and World Club Cup in 1981. These are the greatest successes in the history of the club. Now I am back there as an executive director.

You coached a number of European teams. What impressions did they leave on you?
I like the challenge of new countries, with different culture and traditions. I had mixed experiences, but Fenerbahce were champions and reached the quarter-finals of the Champions League, which was a real success.

As a player and as a coach you had a big impact on Japanese football...
I was among those who helped to launch the basis of the J.League and later I was head of the national team and we were champions of Asia. I'm really proud of that.

You were also sports minister of Brazil...
For me it was difficult to be responsible for the whole of sport. But my life is football. I feel most comfortable working in football.

Rumen Paytushev

● 1984

World Soccer featured the contrasting fortunes of clubs on "two sides of the Berlin Wall". From the East, Stefan Tarras wrote about Dynamo Berlin: "The East Germans have constantly disappointed at football. In European competition their clubs have made barely an impression.

"If there were no outstanding club sides in East Germany this would be understandable, perhaps. But the fact is that Dynamo Berlin have now won the league championship six years in a row – and that sort of record takes a lot of ability and effort in whatever country."

Meanwhile, from the West, Ian Macleod reported on the decline of Eintracht Frankfurt: "The decline of a great club is always sad, but when that club is one who took part in what was perhaps the greatest club match of all time, then the process is even sadder.

"For that one lost game, they gained more respect than many other clubs have received in winning half a dozen trophies."

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Rinat DASAYEV

Spartak Moscow, Sevilla & Soviet Union
One of the world's greatest goalkeepers, capped 91 times by the Soviet Union

WHEN YOU PLAYED for the Soviet Union back in the 1980s, did you feel under state and political pressure?
There was a kind of pressure on us but it wasn't so heavy that you struggled to cope. Even the fact that the Soviet Union was a closed country wasn't a reality for us because we were always travelling and, anyway, we didn't live the same sort of lives as other people.

But you couldn't go abroad as players do now?
No, that was the only issue. But we grew up in the Soviet Union and were Soviet athletes so we were part of this society and didn't see it from any other point of view. We were embedded in this lifestyle.

Which era was better?
It's true we were not paid the sort of wages as players now, but prices were very low and the money we were getting was more than enough for us to enjoy our life. We had no problems buying apartments or cars. Also, when I eventually went to Spain there was nothing I found that surprised me because I had already travelled so much. What was difficult was to learn languages. I was 31 when I joined Sevilla but I felt like a teenager because I couldn't explain what I needed or wanted them to do. I cut myself off from the team and that was the consequence of a lack of linguistic skills. Then I learned Spanish.

What do you remember of the collapse of the Soviet Union?
Because I was in Spain I did not witness what was happening in Russia so I was fortunate in that respect. I called my friends and they said: "Stay, don't come back." I was sheltered by my family and friends from the sad reality which the country was living through. When I finally came back after 10 years in Spain I had another challenge: I had to learn Russian all over again and I found I needed a lot of time to think before I could speak confidently.

Triple...Dasayev played in three World Cups for his country

> **"It's time for Akinfeev to change clubs or he won't improve"**

And now?
I run my own academy, with 200 kids, in the Luzhniki sports complex and I'm supporting Russia's 2018 World Cup bid. I'll be very happy to have played a part in the bidding process if we should win – but if I were a player I would be twice as happy. It would not only mean a chance to play in a World Cup in my own country but it would have been a good opportunity to become a world champion.

Who do you consider the world's top goalkeeper?
When I was playing there was a top goalkeeper in almost all the national teams but not now. I don't really rate Julio Cesar, while Gigi Buffon, unfortunately, seems to be finished. Not Iker Casillas either. Last year Real Madrid lost a lot of games because of him while Victor Valdes delivered a very good season for Barcelona. For me Petr Cech is the best. What's important is technique in handling the ball, reading the game, coming out of goal and the way a goalkeeper begins a counter-attack. Cech has it all and, respect to him, he came back to play as well as he does after a traumatic injury.

And what about Russia's own keeper, Igor Akinfeev?
He looked as if he would be the best when he began among the youngsters but now he is not delivering. He is not progressing any more as he did for the first few years. Probably it's time for him to change clubs and change leagues otherwise he won't improve.

Who was the most important coach in your career?
Konstantin Beskov, who was my coach for 11 years with Spartak. Then also there was Valeri Lobanovskyi who was coach of the national team during my time for five or six years.

Which were your favourite games?
I have two. One was the first game against Holland in the 1988 European Championship finals – the game we won. The other, my first choice, was against Brazil in 1982 – it was my first World Cup. I still watch the dvd from time to time. I still think I could have stopped both their goals if I had used one hand instead of two.

What was the best goal you conceded?
Of course, Marco Van Basten's volley in the 1988 European Final. He might have tried 1,000 times to repeat it without managing to do so. I find everyone remembers me too for this goal – and it's now more than 20 years ago.

Keir Radnedge

● 1985

One of soccer's darkest days happened at the Heysel Stadium in Brussels on the night of the European Cup Final. Thirty-nine people died and English clubs were subsequently banned from European competition for six years.

Keir Radnedge commented: "One of the most depressing features of the aftermath of the Heysel Stadium horror has been the way in which English clubs have tried to deny and evade their responsibilities.

"Not to put too fine a point on it, they have totally misread the mood of the nation. The British public were not particularly surprised or aggrieved at the suspensions inflicted so quickly by UEFA and FIFA. Most people felt that such shock treatment was long overdue and looked to the league clubs to, belatedly, respond with positive action against hooliganism.

"The loudest response has been a bleating that the government should cough up the £15million needed to comply with the stricter safety standards on the way."

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Daniel PASSARELLA

River Plate & Argentina
Captain of the 1978 World Cup-winning team and later national coach, he is now president of River Plate

WHICH DID you like best: playing, coaching or being club president?
I will never lose the essence of a player. This gave me the opportunity to become coach and now president of my dear club.

But in 1994, when you became national team coach, you said it was the greatest thing that ever happened to you...
Perhaps at the time.

You took over the club from a committee which had left it in a terrible state, both financially and facing relegation...
Precisely, and I want to return it to its former glory, as it was when I played and later coached it. It is a challenge I want to take up.

Would you also like to become president of the Argentinian FA one day?
No. Today my only objective is called River Plate.

In the 1978 World Cup, Cesar Menotti made you his on-field general. But you did not follow his tactics when you became a coach...
We both want attacking teams, but there are different methods. He preferred reducing spaces and I don't. I liked using the offside trap, but as a surprise not a system. I prefer 4-3-1-2. The most important thing for me is to have as many players as possible with good ball control. It is much easier for such players to assimilate a game plan and I want players who can think as well as play. I have a coach [Angel Cappa] who does more training with the ball than at many other clubs who pay too much importance to physical exercises, and we also have the same system in the junior teams.

When you took over as president you found that many of River's junior players had already been half-sold to agents or investors...
That is terrible. Investors are no use to the game. They take a big part of the money without doing anything. Years ago I said that if I was a club director I would give the best contracts to players who have no agent/investor and I am trying to do that now. But these people are so imbedded in the game. Like every club, we need to sell players to live, but we will try to sell not more than two a year and not the many that River Plate sold in the past.

Paths of glory...Passarella became a world champion on his home soil

> **"I had to rebuke Maradona for setting a bad example with his nocturnal escapades"**

What has been the most important change in the game since you stopped playing?
From my position, as a defender, that the goalkeeper can not pick up the ball from a back pass.

When did you start playing?
When nine years old I was already playing in my home-town club and at 15 I was in their first team. Later I had trials at Boca Juniors and Estudiantes, but they did not sign me. River Plate did when I was 21, and two years later I was in the national team and soon its captain. I was known for my hard left-foot shot, but that was more of a necessity. When I was six, I broke my right leg and learned to play more with my stronger left.

Why did you retire at 32 when you were still in good shape and then leave as national coach when you were not dismissed?
I wanted to leave by the front door and not when I get booed off the field as a player. And later, four years as national coach was quite enough. I wanted to leave on my own account. I don't think I did things badly. What happens here is that they always criticise you if you don't win the World Cup. The media always look for problems but never ask you about tactics or strategy.

I understand you don't like the media and that you pick your friends carefully. Who would you rate among them?
Menotti, he gave me my chance in the national team when I was only a reserve at River Plate. Also, Enrique Wolff [River Plate defender and now leading TV soccer commentator]. I remember arriving at River Plate without football boots and he gave me a pair. Certainly not Diego Maradona! Carlos Bilardo gave him the captaincy he always wanted when I fell ill and later I had to rebuke him for setting a bad example with his nocturnal escapades. And when I was coach he was always attacking me and it was obvious then that he wanted my job.

So what was the best time in your career... and the worst?
The best was being a successful player and then getting the chance to be coach and now president of River Plate. The worst was when I was taken ill in Mexico and could not play in my third World Cup. They even said I had cancer, but it was the water.

Eric Weil

● 1986

Shortly after the start of the World Cup finals in Mexico, former FA chairman and FIFA president, Sir Stanley Rous, regarded by many as "the father of football" died at the age of 91.

World Soccer **ran an interview with Rous shortly before his death in which he mentioned the idea that FIFA wanted to name the new World Cup trophy (Brazil had kept the original Jules Rimet trophy) after him: "At one stage I refused FIFA the idea of their putting forward a trophy called the Rous Cup and said instead it should be a World Cup. I did not feel that it was fitting for me to have a trophy named after me. However, much to my surprise, the Football Association – at my 90th birthday celebrations – announced that they were introducing a Cup called the Rous Cup to be played for between England and Scotland and I found this a very flattering idea. In any event, I could not refuse, because since I was not asked about it in the first place, I could not say no."**

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Ian RUSH

Liverpool & Wales
One of English football's greatest-ever goalscorers

YOUR STRIKE partnership with Kenny Dalglish is legendary. How do you think it rates in modern football history?
Well, now that I am retired I think it's fair for me to say it was the best! We worked really well together. I was quick and could finish and Kenny... well, Kenny was one of the best players in the world. I knew how good he was and he knew how quick I was – and I don't think there could have been anybody better in the world at finding me and putting me in positions to score. His vision and skill was incredible.

Do you see anyone in modern-day football that compares to you two?
I would have to say David Villa and Fernando Torres with Spain, but generally strikers don't seem to play in pairs any more. Being a striker these days is a lonely role. If you look at the best goalscorers in the world – people like Wayne Rooney, Lionel Messi, Cristiano Ronaldo – most aren't even out-and-out strikers. And even when teams do play two up front the squad system means you rarely see the same two playing week in, week out.

How has the game changed over the years?
Systems and styles change and so does the pace of the game, but I think that can be overestimated. Yes, the game has got quicker, but that's partly down to the equipment. The boots are lighter, the ball is lighter and the pitches are so much better. Perhaps you have to be physically stronger now but that comes with modern training methods. And I'm a great believer that a lot of the game is in the mind. Players who were mentally strong in the 1980s and 1990s would have no problem adapting to the new ways.

What's your first big football memory?
Playing for Chester City in the FA Cup at Newcastle in 1980 and scoring in a 2-0 win. That was the day I realised how much I wanted to play at the top level. To play at St James' Park in front of a 30,000 crowd and feel the atmosphere was incredible. That game helped me earn a move to Liverpool, too. The club's scout, Tom Saunders, later told me they were watching me and felt the real test was how a player handled it all away from home.

Goals galore...Rush says he owes much of his success to team-mate Dalglish

"When I first heard the Kop it made the hairs on the back of your neck stand up"

How did you feel when you first arrived at Liverpool and heard the Kop in full cry?
It was awesome, it made the hairs on the back of your neck stand up. It was such a famous club and I was very shy and very nervous. For the first year I changed next to Ray Clemence and Alan Hansen – people I had been watching on television – and for a few months I don't think I even said a word, I was too scared! There were other big players there, like Graeme Souness, and it took four or five months for me to realise they were normal people who wanted to help me do well.

Liverpool used to put young arrivals in the reserves to "learn the Liverpool way". Is that another thing that's changed?
These days millions are spent on young players and the pressure is to throw them straight in and demand they perform. It was a great grounding for me to do my apprenticeship in the reserves. You could make mistakes and learn from them without the pressure and media glare. It was very important to me – a shame things have changed.

What's your best memory of Liverpool?
There are so many but probably winning the European Cup in 1984, or the double in 1986, especially as we beat Everton in the FA Cup Final at Wembley and I scored. I was in dreamland.

You left briefly to sign for Juventus in 1987 but returned a year later. How do you look back on your time in Italy?
It was difficult at first because they didn't have the team spirit I was used to at Liverpool. I expected it to be the same because Juventus are a huge club, the Liverpool of Italy if you like. But it wasn't. The fans were great and chanted my name, but the players seemed to play as individuals and it was hard to get used to. I thought I did well enough, I got eight goals in the league. I would never say I regret going there. I grew up a lot, I learned to look after myself.

It's been 20 years since Liverpool won the league. Will the glory days ever return?
Yes, I really believe it. If you don't hope and believe then it will never happen. If we can get new owners and strengthen the squad I see no reason why not. We have a good manager in Roy Hodgson, and players like Steven Gerrard and Jamie Carragher who are steeped in Liverpool will do anything to make them successful. Kenny Dalglish is still in and around the place, and the Kop is still making the same noise, especially on European nights. Not everything in football has changed, not at Liverpool.

Chris Hatherall

1987

Diego Maradona, now at Napoli, helped the Italians to their first-ever Serie A title. Jane Nottage was at the San Paolo stadium to witness it for *World Soccer*.

In the June 1987 issue of World Soccer, Nottage wrote: "Tens of thousands of Neapolitans – some of whom have probably never been near the San Paolo stadium – ran out into the streets waving, singing, chanting and dancing after the 1-1 draw with Fiorentina which sealed the title. It was a poor game but, together with Internazionale's 1-0 defeat by Atalanta, the single point was enough to crown Napoli champions with one game to go.

"At the final whistle, young fans ran on to the field, hoisting Maradona shoulder-high before letting him down to complete a victory lap with his team-mates."

worldmags

Marco VAN BASTEN

Ajax, Milan & Holland
European Footballer of the Year three times and *World Soccer* World Player of the Year in 1988 and 1992

HAS THE GAME CHANGED much since you were a player?
The game itself has not changed much, it's just a bit more physical. But the life of a football player has changed a lot because there are so many games now and there is far more media interest than when I was a player. Otherwise, the pitch is the same, the laws are the same, the number of players is the same. The one thing is that the area in which you play on the field is a little bit smaller because things are getting quicker and players are physically stronger because they have a lot more people working on that side of things. But technically and tactically it's the same as 10 or even 30 years ago.

Did that goal against the Soviet Union in the European Championship change the course of your whole career?
That goal changed everything. It was the only tournament Holland has won in its whole history and we should be very proud of that. Afterwards, it's easy to write a nice book...but things could easily have been very different. We had lost our first group game to Russia. Then I came into the game against England. If we had lost that game – and it was a very even match, they hit the post twice – the story would have been completely different. The book would have been completely different.

What went wrong at the 1990 World Cup in Italy?
It started before the finals when the trainer, Thijs Libregts, was replaced by the KNVB. We were asked, as a squad, who would be our favourite and we all said Johan Cruyff. But then all of a sudden Rinus Michels, who was technical adviser to the federation, came up with Leo Beenhakker. That made for a very strange start to the World Cup because nobody was happy. To be fair, it was also difficult for Beenhakker because we didn't make him feel very welcome. Then some of us had been playing in the European Cup Final with Milan so we arrived late at the training camp, which didn't help. After that we prepared at an isolated castle in Yugoslavia and then in Sicily, where we had to train at seven in the morning because of the heat. It was all strange and unsettling. Also, not only had we won the European title in 1988 but by 1990 a lot of the players in the squad had won international trophies with their clubs so the team spirit was not the best. We didn't give everything for each other, you could see it both in training and in the games. So we had a bad World Cup. We came through the first round but then we lost against West Germany – though with a little luck we could have won that game.

> **"That goal (v Soviet Union in Euro 88) changed my life"**

European champions..Van Basten helped Holland to success in 1988

You played much of your career in Italy. Do you think you have brought a mixture of Dutch and Italian football cultures to your new job as a coach?
I don't know if I take anything in particular from one or the other; I just like to win and play well. But if all I did was sit on the bench just hoping for a win that would not be good for my health. It's important that you work and talk with the players about the way you want to play the game. That is how you make real progress beyond just "winning is good, losing is bad".

But fans will want, above all, to see you win, won't they?
That's a different way of approaching the games. From my point of view we have to work with players in our own way knowing that, logically, the fans want to see a spectacle. That's their right, but I also have rights of my own.

Is it hard to find 23 players who understand your football philosophy?
It's good to have players thinking about team issues, but you also need individuals who can make a difference because if you only have players who work for the team and you don't have someone who can dribble past three or four people then it's hard to make a breakthrough. A player like Arjen Robben is a technically good individual player who also works for the team and if you have such players it makes your football both entertaining to watch and dangerous for your opponents.

Keir Radnedge

● 1988

Flamengo won the Brazilian championship for a record fourth time when they beat Internacional 1-0 in the second leg of the final in front of 100,000 fans at the Maracana. Eric Weil was there for *World Soccer* and wrote: "The match, played in constant rain, was highly exciting. Bebeto scored the only goal after 16 minutes.

"Flamengo played the fluid attacking soccer which took them to their last title [1979], the Libertadores Cup and then the World Club Cup....the kind which brings so many fans to make them the most popular club in Brazil. The crowd would have been far larger if it had not been for the rain, but all Flamengo's 22 fan clubs were represented and it was calculated they brought 15 tins of shredded paper, 10 tons of toilet rolls, 300 boxes of fireworks and 100 smoke bombs."

Elsewhere that year, controversial Atletico Madrid chairman Jesus Gil appointed former Manchester United boss Ron Atkinson as manager.

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Emilio BUTRAGUENO

Real Madrid & Spain

The spiritual leader of the Real side that won an unprecedented five titles in the late 1980s and is now a club director

WHEN YOU joined Real Madrid they had not won the Champions Cup for 16 years. Was it the obsession then that it appears now?
Real Madrid is prestigious because of its nine European Cups, that's what defines us, it's our competition, but it depends what you mean by "obsession" – that can sound negative. It is always our priority. It's different now; to play in it in my era you had to win the league. The league mattered so much because it was the bridge that carried you to the European Cup. Now you can be fourth and still compete for it.

Is the European Cup devalued as a result?
No. UEFA have managed to create the best competition in the world, one that offers opportunities for all, but also values and respects history. The balance is perfect. The best teams are there, the historic clubs, but there are chances for everyone. Since 1993, when Milan did it, no one has won it two years running. That gives an idea of how enormously difficult it is.

Is the Champions League becoming a closed shop with the same teams? Does it risk becoming self-perpetuating?
Well, last year Lyon reached the semi-final, but it is true that the great powers continue to be the great powers and the ones who have the biggest budgets.

Is budget more of a factor now than it was when you played, both domestically and at European level?
Possibly. The differences are bigger and that is reflected on the pitch. But while Madrid and Barcelona got huge points totals in the league last year, for instance, I don't think that was normal and it's very hard to see it happening again. That said, under normal circumstances the Spanish title will be between the two clubs.

"When I watch our old games I'm struck by the fact everyone gets time to think"

"The Vulture" strikes ...Butragueno

Beyond the European Cup, what does Madrid's identity rest upon?
Madrid is a way of understanding life. Our identity is rooted in Alfredo Di Stefano and Santiago Bernabeu. We strive to be honourable and noble. The values that guide Madrid guide life: commitment, loyalty, identity, a desire to improve constantly. Winning at all costs is not acceptable. Di Stefano and Bernabeu are our history and always present. You adapt to the times but some values never change. There's an ethical code, a way of behaving.

In that sense, is this club the same as it was when you were a lad?
No, the structure has changed completely. It's more professional. It's a business now. When I was a young player, for example, there was no marketing department; now they generate a third of our income a year – a third of €450million. In my time no one had mobile phones either, now it's unthinkable. My world as a kid was different in the 1970s. I don't know if that's progress, maybe it's the reverse, but it's a reality. And yet there are intangible things that must never change – that's what I mean by values.

What are the biggest changes on the field?
Everything. Then we had a coach and an assistant; now any coaching staff has at least five coaches. When I arrived we had a masseuse, now there are five physios. Coaches are far better prepared and qualified now. Tactically, any team – and I mean any team, right down to the Second Division B – is well drilled. Players are quicker, stronger and more aware of tactical principles. They think much faster. There are fewer spaces, the intensity is greater. Players are more complete. When I watch our old games now I'm struck by the fact everyone gets time on the ball, time to think...it was man-to-man marking then; no one does that now!

Watching the 1981 European Cup Final between Liverpool and Real Madrid, the year before you joined the club, the most striking thing is how dirty it is...
Yes. Refs have changed, technology has changed. Televising every game increased the likelihood of players being caught. You can't just hit someone safe in the knowledge that no one will see it.

Hard defenders are the victims of television, then?
"Victims"? You have to have physical contact but this is a spectacle so it's good that the best players play every game. Coaches have to stop talented players just as they always have – but within the rules, with technical and tactical means, not violence.

You say it's a spectacle, but ultimately isn't winning all that matters?
Winning by playing well isn't the same as running down the clock, defending desperately and scraping a win. You compete to win, that's the bottom line. But it is a game and the aim of any game, in essence, is to enjoy yourself. If you win, you might feel satisfied but that's not the same. When you win and enjoy yourself it's marvellous.

Do players really enjoy football?
Yes. On the pitch, it's a delight. I see football as a way of expressing yourself, of inventing things. When you have the ball, it's about taking decisions, resolving a problem, creating something...

That was very much the hallmark of the *Quinta del Buitre* (the five vultures), the core of the Real Madrid side you played in...
There are some tactical aspects you can learn but talent is innate and we had it. We also all had the same interpretation of the game, it was very harmonious. We were lucky, we all emerged at the same time and we

1989

***World Soccer* ran an interview with the new manager of Real Madrid – a certain John Toshack. Talking to Keir Radnedge in the November 1989 issue, Toshack said:**
"I had four very happy years with Real Sociedad. It's a lovely city and the Basques are smashing people. I would happily have gone on working there for a long time to come. But the offer came to manage Real Madrid, which must be the most famous club in the world, and when something like that happens in your life you say to yourself: 'What are we here for? What's this all about?'

"An opportunity like that comes once in your life. You have to take it. You have that responsibility not only to yourself but to your family. My son can turn round one day and say to his friends: 'My Dad managed Real Madrid' and that will mean something.

"For me, that's what it's all about."

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On the prowl...Butragueno attacks the Denmark defence during his four-goal performance at the 1986 World Cup

complemented each other perfectly. We were also lucky to have the backing of the club. Alfredo Di Stefano supported us and that was unprecedented at the time. A kid can be talented at 17 or 18, but if no one gives him the chance he won't make it. Talent alone is not enough. At that time, Madrid had gone a number of years without winning the league, there was the disappointment of the 1982 World Cup, and we appeared. We were a breath of fresh air, we had a very specific, technical style – it wasn't really in line with what had happened in the previous years at the club or the way that most teams played. But the really magical thing was that we were all from Madrid; the level of identification with the club and fans was huge.

You won five successive league titles. But because of a great Milan side you never won the trophy that defines the club...
We reached three successive European Cup semi-finals. First against Bayern Munich, then PSV, then Milan. The first two times we should have won the European Cup – especially in 1988 against PSV. We drew in Madrid 1-1 and then drew 0-0 away but [PSV keeper] Van Breukelen was splendid. That was our great opportunity. Then, later, Milan turned up and they were a better team than us, tactically and physically. We were an extraordinary team...it was our time. We felt that something had escaped us.

If that was the worst moment of your career, presumably the best was the four goals against Denmark at the 1986 World Cup?
I met up with my dad afterwards and we couldn't believe how lucky I had been. The reaction of both of us was: "Wow!" I could score goals but I wasn't a great goalscorer normally. If you analyse it, it wasn't one of my best games but in terms of goals everything fell right. The first was a bad back pass and the second a header from a corner. Me? A header! That sums it up. But then we lost to Belgium on penalties. After that game I felt we would never get as good a chance again. If only I could have scored three against Denmark and saved the other for Belgium.

Who are the best teams you've seen? What do you make of Barcelona's Dream Team?
Great, great, great, great teams? Ajax in the 1970s, Milan from the 1990s. In terms of being dominant, that's it. Barcelona with Johan Cruyff were a great side but they weren't dominant in the same way. They won the European Cup the year Milan were not there and then lost another one to Milan 4-0. In Spain they played very well, but you have to take into account that they won three La Liga championships on the final day, while relying on other teams' results. Milan are the team for me – five finals in seven years.

> **"If only I could have scored three against Denmark and saved the other for Belgium"**

And the best player you have seen?
Maradona, no debate.

Do you have a wish for the next 50 years of the game?
We should be satisfied that football has been taken to all corners of the world and the media has played a central role in that. What Spain did at the World Cup was incredible. We've never seen such identification before, a group representing the country, creating unity. That was truly wonderful and I hope that feeling can be strengthened. It's important not to lose the historic values of football, its eternal essence, the origins of the game – the spirit of its founders. We have to adapt ourselves to modern times to be able to protect what is special. The passion for football, the feeling, the enjoyment, remains the same...and that should never be lost.

Sid Lowe

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Lothar MATTHAUS

Bayern Munich, Internazionale and Germany
Captained his country to World Cup victory in 1990 and played in more World Cup games (25) than anyone else

ARE YOU HAPPY that you played in your era and not today?
Every professional thinks his time is the best, the most competitive and entertaining. I'm no different.

What is your fondest memory from your playing days?
I can't put into words how good I felt when I made my pro debut for Borussia Monchengladbach back in 1979 or when I played my first game for West Germany the following year. Achieving goals was what I was all about and the satisfaction was immense. However, nothing can beat skippering the *Nationalmannschaft* when we won the 1990 World Cup. I also have super memories of the celebrations which followed Inter's *scudetto* in 1989. The openness and enthusiasm of the Italians suited me.

What was the best game of your career?
That's easy. Our first game at Italia 90, the 4-1 victory against Yugoslavia. I was in the form of my life. I scored twice and felt I could do absolutely anything I wanted.

Which goals stand out?
In my first season as a pro I scored for Gladbach with my left foot in the 1980 UEFA Cup Final against Frankfurt – shame we lost on the away-goal rule. But the best I ever scored was in a Bayern v Leverkusen league game in 1992. Mehmet Scholl pulled a corner back to the edge of the box and I volleyed it first time into the top corner. It was a one-in-a-thousand effort. At the time many people doubted me. I'd just come back to Bayern after my spell in Italy and had been out for several months with a cruciate ligament injury. This was my answer.

How different was your era from today?
I think there was a stronger bond between club and player in my time.

On top of the world...Matthaus' Italia 90 experience was unbeatable

"I went too far with my comments at times. I ruffled feathers, I was too honest"

The Bosman ruling and the power of agents has seen to that.

If you could rerun your career would you have done anything differently?
Everybody makes mistakes and at times I went too far with comments on various matters in public. I ruffled feathers, I was too honest. In retrospect I should have ended my international career before 2000. Of course I'm proud to have won 150 caps, to have lasted for two decades at the top level, but carrying on until Euro 2000 was an error. To go out on such a bad note [Germany were eliminated at the first-round stage] was not what I wanted.

What has been the biggest change in football since you stopped playing?
As far as German football is concerned I've noticed a great improvement in our tactical appreciation. We've become much more open to ideas and methods from abroad, things we once would have sniffed at. During my time with Inter [1988-92], I saw at first hand how much they put into the tactical side of the game. Match preparation was intense. Since then we've caught up.

Which player in the past 50 years have you most admired ?
Diego Maradona was the most gifted player I ever saw. His skills were from another planet. Almost single-handedly he turned Argentina into World Cup winners and Napoli into Serie A champions. With all due respect, he carried those teams.

Who was your favourite team-mate?
Undoubtedly Andy Brehme, who played alongside me for Bayern, Inter and the national team. He didn't always receive the credit he deserved. He was two-footed, dynamic, intelligent and could both shoot powerfully and put in great crosses. A world-class full-back or wing-back, we had a perfect understanding.

Who was your biggest influence?
I was lucky with all my coaches. They had their specific qualities and helped make me the player I was. That said, I do have a particular admiration for Franz Beckenbauer. I loved playing for him when he was *Bundestrainer*. He was in charge but it didn't stop him sounding out our opinions. He created a positive atmosphere to work in.

How would you like to be remembered?
As player who never gave up and kept driving on. Whether I was on a man-marking mission, attacking from midfield or playing libero, I made sure I gave my all. I'd like to think I made my mark on German football.

Nick Bidwell

● 1990

World Soccer **reported on the new united Germany following the fall of the Iron Curtain across eastern Europe. While many, including national team manager Berti Vogts, were delighted that Germany would be represented as one nation and have the best players from both east and west to choose from, other former star players were raising doubts. Gunther Netzer told *World Soccer*: "The playing standards in the Eastern Oberliga are clearly not as high as in the Bundesliga. They lack foreign coaches and players.**

"If any of the players want to join the Bundesliga, that's ok. But I would be against their footballers coming over in droves to play in the Second Division."

Gerd Muller added: "Even their top players are simply not good enough to displace our current internationals. The same goes for their clubs.

"Only Magdeburg and Dynamo Dresden should be admitted to the Bundesliga, but they would soon be relegated."

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Diego MARADONA

Boca Juniors, Barcelona, Napoli & Argentina
Played in four World Cup finals and captained his country to victory in Mexico in 1986

IF YOU HAD your career again would you do anything differently?
I made many mistakes and suffered the consequences – the worst was taking drugs. It probably shortened my active career and hurt my family, which I will never stop regretting. Also, perhaps I left to play abroad too soon [at 22 for Barcelona] and I realise now that, growing up in poverty, I was not mentally prepared for the change.

Would you have rather been a professional player today than in the 1980s?
I'd still like to play today. It never stops hurting that my playing career is over as my passion for the sport is as strong as ever. I was happy in my whole career, whether playing for club or country.

What has changed in the game since you played?
I don't think it is any better technically today. In many countries – as in Argentina – the game is no longer played on quiet streets or vacant grounds, mainly as these places hardly exist any more. But these are the places where basic skills are best learned and that is where I played as a kid. Today, players lack the same ball skills and more importance is given to physical fitness, tactics and defensive play. It sometimes looks as if players have been replaced by robots. Tactics are vital, but they should not dominate the game – but that is what is happening today and it makes games less interesting. Also, there are more competitions these days and players have to play too much. As a result, there are more injuries, players go on the field tired and their performances suffer. Fans pay a lot of money to watch games and, I think, get less entertainment than in my day.

Are players paying too much attention to money rather than the game?
I think that when players go on the field they still think only of winning.

Happy days...Maradona lifts the World Cup in 1986

"It never stops hurting that my playing career is over"

What were the happiest and saddest days in your career?
Obviously holding the World Cup aloft in 1986 was the happiest. And when I got a drug suspension and then when I could no longer play were the saddest.

And since then?
The day I was named national coach was the happiest – and when we lost 4-0 to Germany to go out of this year's World Cup, that was the saddest day.

What happened in this year's World Cup, when it was thought that, with so many players standing out in European football, Argentina could be among the favourites?
I know what it is to play [and win] in a World Cup, but in 1986 we had a lot of doubts as a group and as a team. This year it was a much better group and team and I think they really deserved to win the World Cup. This year's players were on a higher level and understood much faster than the '86 team. Today you do not have to explain the same thing to them 20 times. We had one bad match – against Germany. We had everything planned, the marking well defined and we lost a goal from their first centre. From that point another match began and, as we strove for goals, we were exposed to counter-attacks.

How did you feel when the Argentinian FA would not renew your coaching contract?
They did not fire me. After that 4-0 loss to Germany, [FA President Julio] Grondona told me in the dressing room he wanted me to stay on as coach, but when we had a meeting back in Buenos Aires, he said the condition was that my coaching staff had to be changed. But I told him that if they failed to renew the contracts of a single member of my staff, they could look for another coach. So the executive committee did not renew my contract. I was very disappointed, but I was not going to let go of any of my helpers.

You recently saw the country's president, Cristina Fernandez de Kirchner, and it was rumoured you asked her for her backing to get the FA to sign you on as coach again...
I was only another guest, but Cristina wanted me to stay as coach. However, I was offered a job in the national sports department. But Claudia [Villafane, his former wife and now his manager] went to see Grondona at the FA offices shortly after the Word Cup to collect the rest of my salary and asked if there was a chance of my returning as coach. He just said this wasn't the time.

There are also rumours that you applied for the Portugal job...
Yes, I'd like to continue coaching, to be close to the sport I so dearly love.

Eric Weil

1991

In the annual *World Soccer* awards, France produced a clean-sweep and won the player (Jean-Pierre Papin), manager (Michel Platini) and team awards, despite neither their national team nor any of their clubs winning a major international trophy. Papin did have a terrific year for Marseille, but in a year when Red Star Belgrade won the European Cup, this result was surprising.

Argentina, contenders for team of the year, ended a 32-year wait to win the Copa America, their last victory coming in 1959. New star Gabriel Batistuta led the way with six goals in the league-based tournament. In the final group, Argentina beat Brazil 3-2, drew with Chile 0-0 then overcame Colombia 2-1 in their final match. Eric Weil described their success: "Argentina rose again from the pit of cynicism and violence to capture the South American championship for the first time in 32 years. Throughout the Copa America, Alfio Basile's new-look side were the more consistent, the most disciplined and the most decisive in attack."

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Franco BARESI

Milan and Italy
A one-club servant, he won six Italian league titles and played in two victorious European Cup Finals

ARE YOU HAPPY that you played in your era and not today?
Yes, I'm happy. If I'd been born 20 years later I would be much richer, but I'm not complaining. I lived through many football eras and all are different from each other, good and bad. I've had enormous satisfaction, I have no regrets. Luckily I have got to meet some extraordinary people, but I have always been true to my principles, which is the most important thing.

Are players today paid too much?
No, I don't think so. The big players, the superstars I mean, are being paid for what they bring in, which is large revenues and huge endorsements. Football is now business. Maybe there are lots of players that are paid too much considering they do not make a difference on the pitch, but players are the healthiest part of football, that's for sure.

What is your fondest memory from your playing days?
Everyone asks me about the *scudetti* and the many trophies we won with Milan, or about my tears after the World Cup Final in Pasadena versus Brazil in 1994, but I'll always remember in my heart the three trials I had at Milan, who only took me on when I was 15 at the insistence of Guido Settembrino, who had accompanied me to the trials. Inter rejected me because I was too frail – my elder brother Giuseppe [Beppe] was taken instead – so I was very nervous. All I could think was football, and that day when Milan signed me I touched the sky with my finger.

If you could rerun your career, would you have done anything differently?
No, I loved Milan too much to have made any other choices. I say that not to ingratiate myself with the fans or to make me sound beautiful. I do not need that. I mean it. Beppe and I were orphaned at an early age, so Inter for him and Milan for me have always been a sort of real family. At other clubs I would have earned more money, and perhaps in the early years of my career I would also have won more trophies, but I'm happy to have stayed in Serie B too and to have contributed to bringing Milan back into Serie A. I could not have asked for more. Maybe I'd like to have won something with Italy but we had no luck. In Italy in 1990 and USA in 1994 we came close, and also in Germany at Euro 88, but it was fate, I guess.

Loyal...Baresi played 719 games for Milan

> **"I loved Milan too much to have made any other choices"**

Who was the best player of your generation?
Diego Armando Maradona is an obvious choice, but I have to say Marco Van Basten, and not only because he was my long-time team-mate. I had the privilege to train with him every day and in training he was even more remarkable than in matches. I was lucky enough to guard the strongest players in the world but he was extraordinary, a complete striker and a very smart man. Sometimes he felt closed, introverted and distant from everybody, but it was just his way. Marco was a champion in every sense.

Who was the biggest influence on your career?
All the managers I had, particularly Nils Liedholm, my true master. And, of course, Arrigo Sacchi. At first it was difficult to deal with him, but then he changed my life.

What's your best game you can remember?
Easy: the World Cup Final against Brazil iat USA 94. I damaged my meniscus in the first game against Nigeria, but 25 days later I played the most important 120 minutes of my career, the dream of every child. But there was no fairy tale. I ended up with cramp and tears for my penalty miss. I'm not ashamed, I gave everything on the pitch and I have no regrets.

What's your favourite career moment?
The first *scudetto* with Milan. It was important but I was too young to fully appreciate it. The first European Cup was memorable too, as was the promotion from Serie B to Serie A. And last but not least, the 1994 World Cup Final in Pasadena. A losing effort, but also a great effort.

What do you miss from the old days?
My hair [he laughs] and the football. The object itself. I miss playing with it. Everything else has its time. My football career was fantastic, and thanks to football I do not miss anything now.

Christian Giordano

● 1992

Denmark stunned the world of football by winning the 1992 European Championship finals in Sweden. Richard Moller Nielsen's squad turned up late to the party – following Yugoslavia's expulsion due to the civil war in the Balkans region – and waltzed off with the glittering Henri Delauney trophy.

In the July 1992 edition, Keir Radnedge wrote: "Entering the tournament as ultimate underdogs, their ambition was limitless. To say 'we take every game as it comes' was to hear Moller Nielsen uttering one of the game's great clichés. But no manager ever used that phrase in more appropriate circumstances.

"The Danes did take each game one at a time. They had no choice. Denmark provided a thrilling reminder of football's unpredictability, even at the highest level.

"Their success breathed new life into European football, into every nation, every club, every player. After all, if Denmark can do it..."

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Roger MILLA

Bastia, Saint-Etienne & Cameroon

One of the first African players to become a major star on the world stage and renowned for his goalscoring celebrations

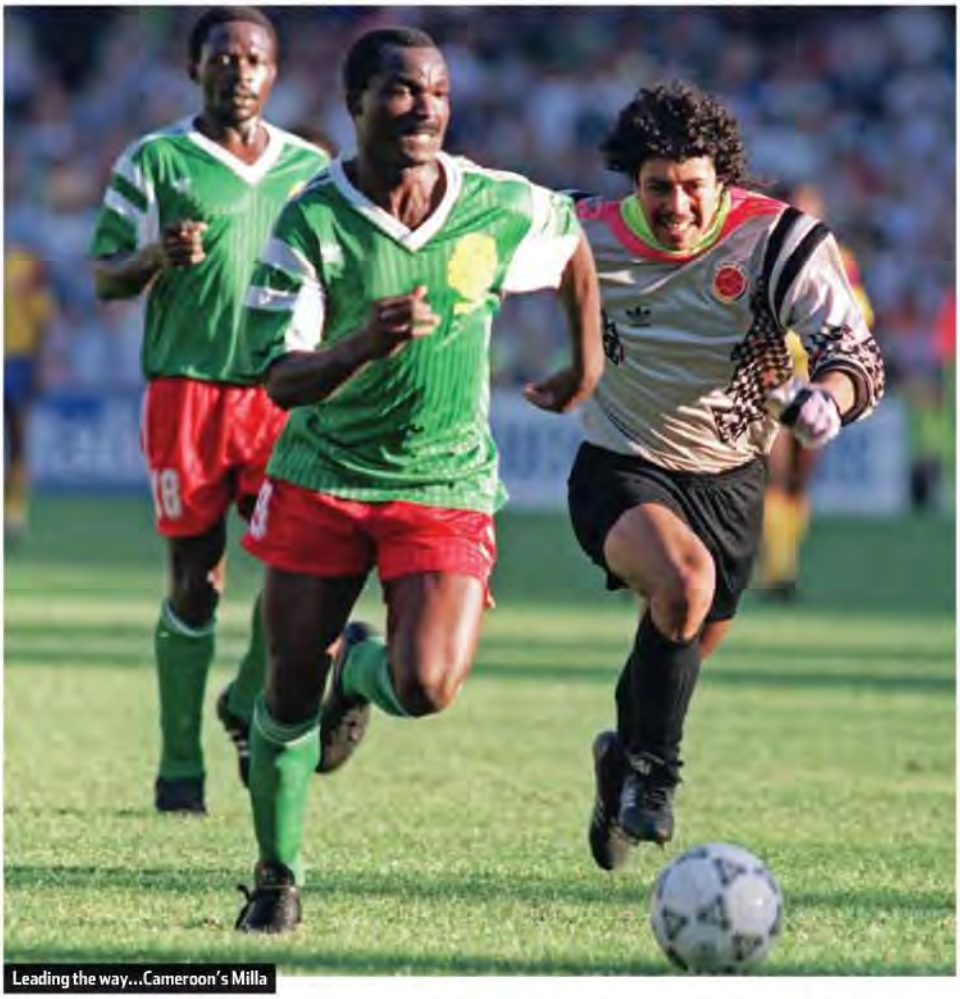
HOW DIFFERENT was your era from today?
On and off the field we didn't have the same high levels of organisation which are the norm today. No fitness coaches, sports scientists, nutritionists or psychologists, and tactical matters were not exactly detailed. Players were, to a large extent, left to fend for themselves. For instance, we'd look after our own boots; after all, they are the tools of our trade.

If you could rerun your career, would you have done anything differently?
I'd have been more aggressive in protecting my rights. Too often I was taken for granted by my clubs in France. They didn't show me enough respect. When I first came to France in 1977 to play for Valenciennes, I was Africa's player of the year. Yet the club could not even give me an adequate roof over my head.

What's been the biggest change in football since you stopped playing?
Undoubtedly the Bosman ruling. Before then the clubs had the whip hand while players were pieces of meat. The player became the boss.

Which players in the past 50 years have you most admired?
I've never seen anyone come close to matching the brilliance of Pele. He was a one-man spectacle, a front man with extraordinary skills who thought quicker than anyone else on the pitch. He did me the honour of writing the preface to my autobiography and thrilled me with his praise for my career.

Is football better today than in your era?
Obviously the game in 2010 is much faster and can be frenetic; players today are tough guys and athletes. But apart from class acts such as Messi, Cristiano Ronaldo, Xavi and a few others, there isn't so much finesse and improvisation as there used to be.



Leading the way...Cameroon's Milla

> **"Pele was a one-man spectacle"**

Who was the biggest influence on your career?
The good Lord.

Which of your coaches have you the most time for?
At Bastia there was a guy called Antoine Redin. At his previous club, Nancy, he had much to do with the development of Platini and he liked attacking football. Unlike many of my coaches, he trusted me and let me express myself.

How would like yourself to be remembered?
As one of those players who will always be associated with the history of the World Cup. And as a talented striker and a pioneer for African players in Europe.

Nick Bidwell

● 1993

One event overshadowed the rest in 1993 when the only man to lift the World Cup for England, Bobby Moore, died of cancer aged 51. *World Soccer* asked Jeff Powell, Moore's friend and biographer, to pen the obituary: "The manner of his leaving was in keeping with the man's way of living. No commotion, no complaint, no thought for himself and, most typically, no loose ends. Bobby Moore was the world's most imperious defender and the most immaculate footballer ever to grace the vast theatres of the people's game. The meticulous attention to detail, the scrupulous care with appearance, the exact precision of timekeeping, the constant observation of manners which maketh a gentleman out of a hero, all were with him to the premature end. A perfectionist to the last, right down to the uncanny anticipation and instinctive sense of occasion which were the essence of his sporting genius. With just days to spare, Moore's last public appearance was at Wembley, the nostalgic stadium he made his personal domain."

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ROMARIO

PSV Eindhoven, Barcelona & Brazil
A World Cup winner in 1994 and one of the few strikers to have scored more than 1,000 goals during his career

ARE YOU HAPPY that you played in your era and not today?
I am pretty sure that I was born at the right time and I never waste time thinking too much about what it could have been. Everything worked fine for me in my career and I am not the nostalgic type. Basically, after Pele, I was the greatest Brazilian player ever.

Are players today paid too much?
Financially, the game has evolved a lot in the last few years, as a consequence the wages have rocketed. But my generation made a lot of money too. I don't really think we can complain. Maybe the guys who played in the 60s or 70s might feel a bit hard done by.

What is your fondest memory from your playing days?
Nothing will ever surpass the feeling of lifting the World Cup in 1994. The hairs on the back of my neck still raise when I think of that moment that meant so much for a generation of players and for the Brazilian fans. There were a lot of young fans who had never seen Brazil win it, since the last time had been with that 1970s team. Another good memory is a game against Uruguay in 1993, a crucial qualifier for USA 94, where I scored two goals after being away from the team for more than a year.

How different was your era from today?
The game has certainly declined in technical terms, judging by the games I have seen on telly, and I don't really feel like watching any more. There is too much emphasis on the physicality these days and the quality of the game is suffering. I blame it on the coaches – especially at youth level, where technique is being put aside and kids are instead stimulated to go to the gym. They are also taught too many defensive moves. I've always thought that attacking is the best defence.

> **Nothing will ever surpass the feeling of lifting the World Cup in 1994**

If you could have your career all over again, is there anything that you would want to do differently?
I was left out of two World Cups [1998 and 2002] and the 1996 Olympics for reasons I have never understood. Maybe I'd like to go back in time and try to do things differently...

Which players in the past 50 years have you most admired?
Pele, Maradona, Ronaldo, Zidane, Van Basten and Michael Laudrup. A lot of people get surprised when I mention Laudrup, but he was the best partner I have played with. He had two very good feet and was a brilliant passer. For a striker, playing with him was a blessing.

Who was the biggest influence on your career?
I grew up watching Reinaldo. He was a great striker who unfortunately never got the chance to really shine too much at international level thanks to a knee injury. But he was a great finisher and for decades he retained the record for having scored the most goals scored in the Brazilian championship. But my greatest inspiration was my father, Edevair. He was my best friend and the guy who put the right things in my head. He passed away a couple of years ago and is sorely missed.

You're standing in the Rio state elections in October. What was your motivation to go into politics?
I am in politics to help people, to give back something to them after all these years where they supported me and put their faith in me. I am particularly interested in projects for the well-being of underprivileged kids, including the ones with special needs [he himself has a daughter with Down Syndrome]. Politics are simple: you bring help to what people need and I intend to do that as an MP.

Fernando Duarte

Highly rated...Michael Laudrup

● 1994

In the September 1994 edition, Keir Radnedge profiled the latest of many Brazilian players to be dubbed "the new Pele". Of 17-year-old Ronaldo, he wrote: "His age and natural talent raise instant comparisons with Pele. At the same age, Pele went to the 1958 World Cup as an unknown reserve and returned home a world figure. Ronaldo, by contrast, went to the 1994 World Cup as a reserve and remained a reserve. But coach Carlos Alberto Parreira never thought of his presence as any more important than as an observer with the future in mind.

"Tostao [Pele's team-mate in the 1970 World Cup] says: 'He has everything to become an international star. We're talking about a phenomenon.'

"The comparisons with Pele were inevitable and Ronaldo came out ahead. His scoring average was higher than Pele's at the same age and Tostao claims that not even Pele had the equal skills in right and left foot which set Ronaldo apart."

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Hugo SANCHEZ

Pumas, Real Madrid & Mexico
One of Mexico's greatest-ever strikers, he was top scorer in Spain's La Liga five times

HOW DID YOU become a footballer?
I followed in the footsteps of my brother Horacio, a professional goalkeeper. He had the chance to play in the Olympic Games in Munich in 1972. I was just 12 and very impressed. The Olympics became my obsession and I was chosen for the national team that played in Montreal in '76. For our preparation we travelled three times to Europe, to the Cannes and Toulon tournaments, and that opened a new universe to me, seeing what life was like there. After that I not only dreamt of being a pro, but of playing in a European league as well.

How did you make that dream come true?
It was in 1981. I had won my second top goalscorer award in Mexico and won the league with Pumas. Two teams were interested: Arsenal and Atletico Madrid. As the World Cup was to be played in Spain the following year, and the Spanish culture was closer to the Mexican, I opted for the *Colchoneros*.

If that happened now, maybe the decision would have been different...
Arsenal are a great team now, but Atletico are back on track too. I never think about the "what ifs", and also, in view of the career I had in Spain, I don't think I was wrong at all.

But you struggled in La Liga at first...
My first season at Atletico Madrid was not easy as the coach who'd bought me was fired shortly after my arrival and the then-president, Alfonso Cabeza, didn't want me at the club. He said the only way I could stay was to give up 50 per cent of my contract. I accepted as I wanted to succeed in Europe and I ended up multiplying that amount several times in the years that followed.

Then you were transferred from Atletico to their main rivals, Real Madrid...
Because of the rivalry, no players could go from one club to the other. So I had an idea: Atletico would sell me to Pumas, my former team in Mexico, and they, in turn, would transfer me to Real. The entire operation was done at the same time. If not, maybe Pumas might have decided to keep me!

Hit man...Sanchez celebrates one of his 29 goals for his country

> **"I broke the record for the most goals in a season (38), a record I still hold"**

Why Real Madrid? It's rumoured that other big European teams also wanted you...
While at Atletico, I was always really impressed by Real Madrid's winning philosophy and when I arrived at the club it was evident. From the biggest star to the last employee, there is a belief that the team will always be champions. I won many titles there and enjoyed my time there a lot.

You arrived at the right time, as the club had other fantastic players...
It was a great team. We had the *"Quinta del Buitre"* [the five vultures], who all came from the club's cantera, and five new players I called *"la Quinta de los Machos"* [the five men]. In my first year we won the league and the UEFA Cup, and I won my second Pichichi (awarded to La Liga's top scorer) to go with the one I'd won at Atletico. In the end, we won five consecutive league championships.

What was the finest moment of your career?
It was at the end of the 1989-90 season. I scored three goals in the last game – and with them Real Madrid won a fifth consecutive league. I also won the Golden Boot, something that had never been achieved by a Spanish league player. I also broke the record for most goals scored in a season [38], a record I still hold.

But you never won the European Cup...
It was different back then. There wasn't the same motivation to win it as there is now. The most important thing for me was always the league, it was my obsession.

You became famous for your bicycle kicks. How did you make them look so easy?
When I was four or five I saw my father, a semi-professional striker, make *"chilenas"*, and I loved them. So as I was growing up I decided to specialise in these acrobatic kicks myself, and devoted much time to practise them. After a training session I always stayed behind for an hour or so to improve my finishing. In fact, in those sessions I also invented the famous "scorpion kick" later popularised by Rene Higuita at Wembley.

Who do you consider your heir as a striker?
Football has changed a lot. Now it is more athletic and the forward players must leave the box and participate in building the play. The out-and-out strikers, numerous in my time, are now an endangered species. But I think the one who meets all the conditions is Didier Drogba. I really like the way he plays. A few years ago it was Ruud Van Nistelrooy. In fact, I recommended him to Real Madrid several times, until he was signed.

Martin del Palacio Langer

● 1995

Under the headline "Natural born thriller", *World Soccer* featured a 17-year-old in Madrid just embarking on the start of a long and prosperous career. His name: Raul Gonzalez Blanco.

In the April 1995 issue, Graham Turner wrote: "On October 27 [1994] Raul had been limbering up for a third-team game and nurturing his youthful dreams of becoming the next Emilio Butraguenu. Two days later he had sent 'The Vulture' to the bench and pinched his No7 shirt for the league game in Zaragoza.

"A week later he latched on to a pass from Michael Laudrup to crack a scorching left-footer into the top corner of the Atletico Madrid net. Let's just say that Raul is uncommonly fast and skilful and looks a thrilling blueprint for a major idol."

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Enzo FRANCESCOLI

River Plate, Marseille & Uruguay
South American superstar who helped his country win the Copa America three times

HOW HAS FOOTBALL changed since your playing days?
It's hard to say how much football has changed, but it's certainly more physical, faster, more mobile.

How does the player of today compare with your era?
Players are now prepared differently in terms of training. But I don't know if the game is better than the 80s and 90s. In the 80s it was probably more showy and there were more possibilities to make decisions, time to think. The demands now are greater.

Has team play improved?
I think the average player then was more technical. Teamwork has probably improved, but it's hard to say – it was only in the 80s that we were finding out about other playing styles from around the world. Since then communications have improved and there are no big surprises any more. The improvement in team play started in the 70s with Holland.

What were the highlights of your career?
Wearing and defending my country's colours for many years is what really fills me with pride. Playing in a World Cup was definitely an indescribable experience even if we didn't win. But I did have the experience of three incredible victories in the Copa America. The most important and unforgettable moment happened in the 95 Copa which we won in my country and at the end of my career as a player. To lift the Cup with my father and family as witnesses was...well, there are no words for that.

Did you feel the pressure as one of your country's greatest players?
There's always pressure and for the most important player there is increased pressure as he takes on more responsibilities. You are required to achieve certain objectives and if they are not achieved the focus is on you. Professionally one always tries one's best, but if things don't work out you tend to put more pressure on yourself.

Patriotic...Francescoli (left)

> **"We won the 95 Copa America in my country"**

Did that pressure prevent you from enjoying playing for the national team?
I'd say there were times when it made me have less of a good time. But as soon as the ball started rolling I'd forget everything that had happened before – I wouldn't think of anything except the game itself. In our era, because of disagreements we had with part of the media...there was some bitterness and a certain air of discomfort when we went to train, to concentrate... but at the moment of the match, no, and the fans always supported us. But it's true there was a certain strangeness in the air before and after the matches. That was far from ideal, but it was part of the game and we had to accept it.

Despite everything, your generation gave us several happy times...
My generation were champions several times at South American level, that's true, but I'm conscious that we also had some failures along the way.

Rex Gowar

● 1996

On home soil, South Africa became champions of their continent for the first time just two years after the end of apartheid and six years after the release from prison of Nelson Mandela.

Mark Gleeson reported on "a nation reborn": "Two goals in as many minutes by Mark Williams gave South Africa victory over Tunisia amid tumultuous scenes in Johannesburg. It was a tournament which came alive at the end and produced in champions South Africa a new country to fly Africa's flag on the international stage.

"If there was one single reason for the success of the 20th edition of the Nations Cup, it was the sudden burst of colour in stands usually dominated by the black majority. No other sport in South Africa has ever achieved the degree of integration, both on and off the pitch, which football has in a country still struggling to find a common identity from its diverse communities."

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George WEAH

Monaco, Paris Saint-Germain, Milan & Liberia
The only African ever to be voted FIFA World Player of the Year

ARE YOU HAPPY that you played in your era and not today?
You can only make the most of the hand that you are dealt and I believe I made the most of my time as a professional footballer, playing for some of the biggest clubs in Europe. I cannot complain in any way. I was one of 13 kids and, after my parents separated, I was brought up by my grandmother, Emma. Thanks to God and football I was able to make something of my life.

Are players today paid too much?
Football today is big business and the money available to top players reflects this. That said, I'd like to see more of the large sums made in the game trickle down to the small clubs in the game and their players, and for more solidarity to be shown.

What is your fondest memory from your playing days?
Receiving the Ballon d'Or in 1995 was an awesome feeling. When *France Football* contacted me to let me know I'd won, I thought someone was playing a joke on me. It meant a lot. I was the first and only African to be voted number one and I felt I'd proved something to the critics in France who used to say I was good but inconsistent. I've plenty of other super memories, especially celebrating two Serie A titles with Milan [1996 and 1999] and the many successful European nights with Paris Saint-Germain.

The most memorable goal of your career?
Lots of Italian friends still like to remind me of my goal for Milan against Verona at the San Siro, when I ran with the ball from one end of the pitch to the other. I was very excited by a solo effort for PSG in a Champions League game with Bayern Munich and both goals in PSG's UEFA Cup win at Napoli. It was about that time that I began to think I was breaking through to the very top level.

"I'd like to see more of the large sums made in the game trickle down to the small clubs"

Your most difficult opponent?
No question: Basile Boli of Marseille. A snappy dresser off the field and ruthless marker on it.

If you could rerun your career would you have done anything differently?
Everybody can talk of their "could have, would have, should have" moments. Mine are failing to qualify my country Liberia for a World Cup and Monaco's defeat to Werder Bremen in the Final of the Cup-winners Cup in 1992. I'd scored in the semis against Feyenoord and thought I'd do the same in the Final. But I was well marked by a tough guy called [Ulrich] Borowka and never found my feet in the game. It was the first European Final for our coach Arsene Wenger, and all these years later he hasn't yet won one. I hope he'll do it soon.

How different was your era from today?
I think the French league has, on the whole, become more defence-orientated. I was very lucky to begin my career in Europe with Monaco. They had the most modern, forward-looking coach in Arsene Wenger. His ideas were ahead of their time and we all benefited.

What's been the biggest change in football since you stopped playing?
I see more fear among coaches. That was clearly the case at this year's World Cup. Coaches whose top priority is to not lose rather than make the big play to win. I'm not sure at all about the trend of playing just one man in attack. Defences have to be put under more pressure.

Which player in the past 50 years have you most admired?
Zinedine Zidane and Maradona for their ability to do anything they wanted with the ball. Franco Baresi and Paolo Maldini for making defending look so simple. Pele, whose goals still send shivers down my spine when I watch them on DVD.

Who was the biggest influence on your career?
Arsene Wenger, of course. On arriving at Monaco as a young man, I was in a strange new world but he took me under his wing and made me a top player. He worked me very hard. With the rest of the squad resting up, he would take me out for extra sessions, concentrating on my one-on-one play. He'd ring me at home to make sure I was OK and made it easy for me to adapt to European football. Another great coach was Luis Fernandez at PSG. He was my big brother. Unlike another PSG boss, Artur Jorge, he didn't drop you if you made a mistake.

Nick Bidwell

Golden moment...Weah with the Ballon d'Or

1997

Nearly 20 years after his World Cup heroics for Argentina, Mario Kempes' new job drew comment from Keir Radnedge: "Kempes has enjoyed all the adventures with which his career has blessed him. But the wandering Argentinian found himself in too deep after being caught up in the astonishing collapsing pyramid of Albanian football."

Kempes was getting £180,000, a huge sum for such a poor country, for 18 months' work as manager of club side Lushnja, owned by Rapush Xhaferri, who ran one of the country's top pyramid-savings schemes. Just a week after Kempes' first game in charge, the pyramid schemes collapsed, bringing financial and social chaos to the Albanian people. Radnedge continued: "To Kempes' credit he had no intention of abandoning his new club. But when the government banned all sports events he decided it was time to get out 'until things have calmed down'. Realistically, it's unlikely Kempes will ever go back. After all, who can guarantee to pay his wages?"

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Hristo STOICHKOV

CSKA Sofia, Barcelona & Bulgaria

Bulgaria's greatest-ever player and top scorer at the 1994 World Cup

YOU WON THE European Cup with Barcelona in 1992 and Bulgaria finished fourth at the 1994 World Cup. When were you happier?
Both performances are fantastic, I can't make comparisons between them. To be first in Europe was unforgettable because at that time Barca were a great team who deserved to win the trophy. With Bulgaria, we were an excellent generation who peaked in the USA.

What are your memories of the Champions Cup Final in 1992?
To win the European Cup at Wembley is something special. May 20, 1992 will remain the greatest day in Barcelona's history. This is a date I will never forget!

The comparisons are always relative, but which Barca team was better – yours from the 1990s or now?
My Barca were better. That was the best team I ever played in. There were great players like Ronald Koeman, Michael Laudrup, Romario, Guardiola, Zubizarreta, Bakero, Begiristain. And one perfect coach in Johan Cruyff, who knows everything in football. We played football that entertained the fans. I wouldn't change that team for anything. Of course, I was also very happy last year when Barca was number one in Europe and in the world and Guardiola proved his coaching qualities.

Can Bulgaria ever repeat their performance at the 1994 World Cup?
Certainly, but I don't think it will happen in the next decade. We had a great generation with players like Balakov, Kostadinov, Letchkov, Sirakov, Mikhailov, Ivanov, Houbchev. It was very important that most of them had played at western European clubs. They had the self-confidence to take on any team in the world.

Third-place play-off...Stoichkov against Sweden in the 1994 World Cup

"Every time [I played for Barca v Real Madrid] it was like going to war"

In 1994 you were Europe's best player...
That was the best year in my football career. We may have been fourth in the world but I was voted as number one in Europe. In Bulgaria I was sportsman of the year.

Do you have any regrets?
I am sad I didn't play in the World Cup Final. We were close, but the French referee didn't award us a penalty in the semi-final versus Italy. It was my dream, but it didn't come true.

You scored an excellent goal for Barcelona versus Sao Paulo for the Club World Cup in Tokyo, but the Brazilians won the trophy...
Yes, unfortunately we lost the game. Rai was on top form and scored both goals for Sao Paulo. I will never forget that match, though, as I am the only Bulgarian who played in the Club World Cup Final. But we were unlucky. That evening the Japanese TV repeated my goal several times, but it was cold comfort, I was too sad.

Which was your most important goal?
There were a lot, but maybe the free-kick against world champions Germany at the quarter-finals of the 1994 World Cup. That goal put us through to the semi-final.

You are the only Bulgarian to have played in a Barcelona v Real Madrid game. How was it for you?
I will always be a Barcelonista. Every time I entered the pitch it was like going to war. For me this is the greatest derby in the world.

Later you were a coach. How would you define your coaching principles?
As a former striker, my motto is to always attack. I want to win. As a coach I don't need a psychologist; I am the best psychologist! Nobody can motivate the players better than me.

What is your favourite system of playing?
I don't understand systems. On the pitch I have 11 players and everybody knows which position is the best for him. The players define the system, not the other way around.

What is more important: talent or work?
For me, it is 99 per cent work and only one per cent talent. If you are a real professional, you can develop the one per cent.

What did you learn during your stays in Japan and the USA?
I was able to understand better the financial side and the management of a football club.

How has football changed since you were a player?
Football has changed too much. Now it is more commercial and more pragmatic. When we played, we enjoyed it, but now the result is the most important thing.

Rumen Paytashev

● 1998

Despite failing to qualify for the 1998 World Cup, Irish fans still had something to cheer about as they made history on the international stage. Kevin Palmer wrote:
"France 98 took place without the Boys in Green but their ever-exuberant followers were happy to content themselves with the glory won by their stars of the future. And what glory! Ireland, a nation with little more than three million inhabitants, now sit proudly as European champions at both Under-16 and Under-18 level – the first country ever to achieve that feat.

"Some of the youngsters have already progressed to the full national side. Under-18 centre-back Richard Dunne was given a [full] international debut before he had appeared for his club, Everton, while striker Robbie Keane has already made a name for himself with First Division Wolves, and it is important to note that the Under-18 side lifted the trophy without the influence of their star, Blackburn's Damien Duff, who was ruled out by injury."

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Gheorghe HAGI

Real Madrid, Barcelona, Galatasaray & Romania
Played in three World Cups and was voted his country's player of the year six times

IS THE FOOTBALL of today better than that played in your day?
Not necessarily. It doesn't matter when you play, football has different faces of beauty, any time. My era was more spectacular, the love for sport was more present, but today you can admire the forceful footballers; it means that you can admire footballing supermen.

Are you happy that you played in your era and not today?
A player must adapt himself to the game of his time. A great player manages it. I managed it, in the 80s and in the 90s too. I played at the highest level for almost two decades, until I was 36.

How different was your era from today?
In my time football was played by more technical athletes. Fortunately, today, Spain seem to offer us a return to that playing style of the 90s.

If you could rerun your career, would you have done anything differently?
Oh no. My career was a beautiful one. However, thinking now, I would change the match we lost against Sweden which deprived me of the chance to play in a World Cup semi-final [in 1994].

What is your fondest memory from your playing days?
It is difficult to choose in so long a career, but to win trophies is always good to remember and I did win a lot. Maybe the goal against Colombia at the 1994 World Cup; maybe the goals I scored for Real Madrid and for Barcelona. But I'm fully happy because I've offered something for football's history and so many people remember me.

Are players today paid too much?
Yes, sometimes. The wages are exaggerated, but there is an explanation: the players are responsible for football being the most popular event all over the world. The industry monopolised the game and spoiled it in a sense.

Get in...Hagi celebrates his goal against Switzerland at the 1994 World Cup

> **"Spain seem to offer us a return to the playing style of the 90s"**

Which players in the past 50 years have you most admired?
That's difficult to say. I played against Pele when he was 50 and he was the most complete player. He remained an encyclopedia of soccer. Maradona was charming, a player with a fabulous technique who made incredible things happen with the ball at his feet. Johan Cruyff was fantastic, Platini convinced everybody that the game is about intelligence. Today, Messi is adding his name to such greats. Each era has its heroes and I'm proud to be among them.

Who had the biggest influence on your career?
Romania's Nicolae Dobrin taught me how to dribble, Platini to be clever on the field, Cruyff how to find the net.

What are you doing these days?
I'm involved in building my soccer academy in Constanta, where I have invested about €10million. I'm proud that my young players, aged 15 to 16, won the first edition of the Eastern European Trophy, with similar teams from 12 countries. I think I owe to football all I have now – money and glory – so I must give back something to soccer. I hope that my academy's production line could change the face of Romanian football by 2018.

What are your plans for the near future?
To consolidate the infrastructure of my academy and to return as a coach as soon as possible, following a two-year break in which I have missed the game a lot. However, to return, it must be a solid project which could offer me the chance to win at last.

Radu Timofte

● 1999

After 39 years, *World Soccer* bade farewell to the European Cup-winners Cup, which was scrapped by UEFA at the end of the 1998-99 season.

Keir Radnedge eulogised about the tournament's affinity with the British fan in the February 1999 edition: "The British loved the European Cup-winners Cup right from the start. Not merely because the English and the Scots have held a special liking for the vagaries of knockout football but – to be honest – because the often dubious quality of the event meant they felt they had a better chance of winning it than anyone else.

"That was true right from the outset... Rangers were finalists in the first competition, in 1961, and again in 1967 and, after little more than a decade in existence, the pot had been carried off by four English clubs – Tottenham, West Ham, Manchester City and Chelsea – with Liverpool once runners-up."

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Gabriel BATISTUTA

Boca Juniors, Fiorentina, Roma & Argentina
Nicknamed "Batigol", the striker played most of his club football in Italy and remains his country's leading scorer

YOU'RE ARGENTINA'S top scorer. Does personal achievement mean something? Is that your greatest achievement?
No, my main achievement is being respected by supporters wherever I go in the world. I can go to any stadium in Argentina and not be insulted or offended by the supporters of the opposing team. That also applies to Italy and in Latin America, where we have rivalry with other countries like Brazil, Chile and Paraguay.

That's very rare in football, but you were very loyal to Fiorentina...
I was also loyal to the national team. People understand I was always loyal throughout my professional career.

So how do you feel when you see a player like Juan Roman Riquelme retire from the national team?
I don't understand why they do it, but I respect it.

You are one of *World Soccer*'s 50 legendary players from the past 50 years...
That's a great honour, especially as I never played in the top club teams. The Argentina national team is a top side, but most of my club career was spent at clubs like Fiorentina and Roma, but not Real Madrid or Manchester United or Barcelona or Chelsea.

Presumably you had offers from those clubs? Why did you say no?
Because I really fell in love with Fiorentina. I liked the idea of helping a small team to become a big team. I put all my efforts into trying to do that.

And they put a statue up in your honour...
Yes, but it's gone now. When I left for Roma, a lot of the supporters were angry so they took it down.

But Roma was successful for you?
Yes, it was a personal success. I had tried to persuade the managers of Fiorentina that with a big team we could be champions – and then I realised that those managers really didn't have the same ideas as me. That's when I went to Rome. I wanted to prove to myself that having a good team means you can win something.

A decent shout...Batistuta's just scored again for Argentina

Do you regret not finishing your career in Argentina?
I don't know if it's a regret that I did not end my career in Argentina but I achieved great things in Europe. Had I gone back to Argentina at the end of my career, they would have expected me to do the things that I did in Europe, but my physical condition would not have been good enough. I would have disappointed a lot of people and I didn't want to do that.

Are you still in touch with your old team-mates?
A few, yes. I still see Diego...that's Simeone, not Maradona!

Gavin Hamilton

● 2000

Controversy reigned as Manchester United pulled out of the FA Cup to take part in the first ever FIFA World Club Championship, to be played in Brazil. Brian Homewood was in Rio de Janeiro to report for the January 2000 edition of *World Soccer*: "FIFA is describing it as the inaugural World Club Championship, but the controversial new competition in Brazil looks more like one of those European pre-season mini-tournaments in which teams take part by invitation.

"English indignation over Manchester United's withdrawal from the FA Cup to allow them to take part, and criticism of the event's timing, in the middle of the European season and at the height of the Brazilian summer, have tended to overshadow a bigger, more fundamental flaw. Namely, that only half the teams taking part are the present champions of their respective continents."

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Zvonimir BOBAN

Dinamo Zagreb, Milan & Croatia
The winner of four Italian league titles and the 1994 Champions League

ARE YOU HAPPY that you played in your era and not today?
Very happy and I'll tell you why: I got to witness an epochal change. When I was a youngster at Dinamo Zagreb we had to wait for the professional players to get tired of a pair of boots in order to inherit them. When that happened, it was like manna from heaven and, believe me, they were always very worn out. But by the time I was at Milan we had hundreds of pairs of boots made to measure for us. We had the media coverage, the sponsors, the money. I was lucky to have lived through the passage from football as a cottage industry to football as show business.

Are players today paid too much?
It would be easy to give a moralistic answer and say: Yes, it's a shame how much players are paid. But I'm realistic; it's just a question of demand and quality. Players generate wealth and they receive their share of the profit. Take a worker who wakes up at 5am. Of course, the real value of his work is the same, if not greater than, the value of the work done by a footballer. But unfortunately a worker doesn't bring thousands of people to the stadium or a billion people to their TV sets. What players should do is to show respect to those who are not as fortunate as them and help them in every way they can.

What is your fondest memory from your playing days?
It has to be the World Cup in 1998, when Croatia managed to finish third.

If you could rerun your career, would you have done anything differently?
No, because my career has been the faithful reflection of what I was, of what I thought at any particular moment, of my physical and mental qualities.

A handfull...Boban (left) causes problems for Verona in Serie A during the 1996-97 season

"I lived through football as cottage industry to show business"

Pundit...new job

What has been the biggest change in football since you stopped playing?
The media coverage. Nowadays the TV cameras even make it into the changing rooms. In my day, they would never have convinced us to allow cameras into such a sacred place. There have also been three good decisions by FIFA: the rule preventing the goalkeeper from picking the ball up from a back pass, the three points for a win, and the red card for a foul on the last man. These have all contributed to making football faster and less calculated.

Do you think you could have coped with the game today, or is it too fast?
Hey, I wasn't that slow! I played in the Arrigo Sacchi era and it was during that period that football became faster and space became tighter. Since Sacchi there have been no big changes. Arrigo was the last great revolutionary.

Which player from the past 50 years have you most admired?
Diego Armando Maradona. Believe me, the ball even made a different noise when he touched it.

Who is the most underrated player of the last 50 years?
Alessandro Costacurta. Not because he played with me at Milan – the truth is we also had some misunderstandings, we weren't big friends. Aristotle said: I love Plato but I love the truth even more. And the truth is that he has been hugely misunderstood: people say he was only good because he played along side Franco Baresi, but that's a lie. He had everything.

Who do you regard as the biggest Croatian legend of the last 50 years?
I can only speak about my times, so I'll say Prosinecki and Suker.

Dan Brennan

2001

In the February edition, *World Soccer* previewed 100 rising international stars.

They included such names as Nicolas Anelka: "His feline grace, powers of acceleration and ice-cool finishing are there for all to admire. However, he still carries an excess of temperamental baggage."

Iker Casillas: "Gifted and utterly unflappable."

Joe Cole: "His passing is often imaginative, always intelligent. From time to time he has been accused of 'showboating', but so what? It is exhilarating to see a young English player of such rare ability exult in those talents."

Ronaldinho: "Currently carrying the can for Brazil's failure at the Olympics, but is bound to come again. Can play up front or behind the strikers, and his skill, intelligence and audacity make him part of the best Brazilian tradition.

Andrea Pirlo: "Shares Roberto Baggio's technical ability, inventiveness and free-kick prowess"

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Zinedine ZIDANE

Juventus, Real Madrid & France
A World Cup winner in 1998 and scorer of a stunning goal to win the 2002 Champions League Final

ARE YOU HAPPY that you played in your era and not today?
My era was very kind to me. I won every trophy there was to win. Anyway, I'm not looking back to the dim and distant past. I only retired four years ago. The game is essentially the same.

Are players paid too much today?
There's no getting away from it – top players at top clubs do earn massive amounts. The trick for the fortunate ones such as me is to stay humble, never forget where you came from and look to give something back to the game and the fans as often as possible.

What is your fondest football memory?
Becoming a world champion with France in 1998, and scoring two goals in the Final against Brazil was the pinnacle. The huge numbers who turned out to see us parade the World Cup in the streets of Paris was a sight and an experience I'll never forget. Winning Euro 2000 was a proud moment as well. People tend to home in on the 1998 achievement and forget we were much improved as a team in 2000. Not to mention winning the Champions League with Real in 2002.

Did you ever have the perfect game, when everything you tried came off?
I'm my own harshest critic and, take it from me, it didn't happen often. I was particularly pleased with a Euro 96 qualifier in which we beat Slovakia 4-0 in Nantes – I was in the groove right from the start. I was an international novice but just felt so confident that night. My performances against Spain and Brazil at the 2006 World Cup probably were in the same bracket.

Your best goal?
Without question my volley in the Champions League Final of 2002. The sort of goal that only happens one in a thousand times in competition.

Off...heading for a shameful World Cup exit in 2006

> **Football in Spain and Italy is a religion. Less so in France**

Do you think you became a better payer after leaving French football for Juventus and then Real Madrid?
What I did improve was my competitiveness. Football in Spain and Italy is a religion. Less so in France. You have to deliver, or else.

If you could rerun your career would you have done anything differently?
I would have loved to have played for Olympique Marseille, the city where I grew up. While at Cannes a move to OM was in the wind, but I ended up at Bordeaux. Naturally I'm not proud of my red cards for retaliation. After being sent off against Saudi Arabia at the 1998 World Cup there was time for me to return to the side and make amends. I didn't have that opportunity after the 2006 World Cup Final. It was my last act as a professional and not the way to go out. I take full responsibility for my reaction that night – but it doesn't mean I'd ever beg Materazzi's pardon.

Which games left you with the most regrets?
Juve's defeats in the Champions League Finals of 1997 and 1998. I'd lost the 1996 UEFA Cup Final with Bordeaux [against Bayern Munich] and it seemed a little like a curse.

What's been the biggest change in football since you stopped playing?
The role of the media continues to grow at a fast pace. The greatest change in the game is one for the near-future – video technology. I've no problem with it for disputes about incidents in the box which directly lead to a goal, but not for anything else, otherwise a game will last for hours.

Which players in the past 50 years have you admired the most?
As a youngster I loved to watch the tricks and the elegant play of the Uruguayan attacker Enzo Francescoli at Marseille. I'd have paid to see Maradona, Michel Platini, Ronaldo and Xavi today.

Who was the biggest influence on your career?
The coaches I had early in my career: Jean Fernandez and Luis Fernandez at Cannes, and Rolland Courbis at Bordeaux taught me the fundamentals of professionalism. Jean Fernandez was wise and serious; Luis and Rolland were strong personalities who were very close to their players. I like that. It's so much better than having a policeman for a coach.

Nick Bidwell

Glory...heading home a corner against Brazil in the 1998 World Cup Final

● 2002

Wayne Rooney first appeared on the scene in 2002. Keir Radnedge profiled the young Evertonian: "Rooney is still, officially, an 'apprentice' at Everton. This means he is paid just £120 a week. That will rise to a basic £1,000 when he signs his first professional contract and £8,000 every time he plays for the first team – which will be most weeks, fitness permitting.

"He is not expected, however, to lose touch with his roots or to become 'big-headed', despite his new nickname – 'Roonaldo'. Everton fans have a long tradition of idolising centre-forwards, from Dixie Dean to Alex Young, Joe Royle and present captain Duncan Ferguson. It is natural they should be similarly enthusiastic about Rooney.

"David Moyes and owner Bill Kenwright have promised that, despite interest from some of the biggest clubs in the world, Rooney will be staying at Goodison Park. For how long depends on how well and how fast he progresses."

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Sami AL JABER

Al Hilal & Saudi Arabia

One of the Arab world's finest players and the first Asian to score at three World Cups

YOU'RE NOW technical director at Al Hilal. What's the biggest difference between your current role and your life as a player?
When you are a player, you only have to think about yourself. It's different when you are working as a technical director because then you have to think about everything else. It's been three years now and I'm getting more and more experienced and I'm trying to learn more and more. I've learned a lot from working with Eric [Gerets], he's a really great coach and a great guy and it's been a pleasure to work with him.

After you stopped playing for Al Hilal, did you always intend to go into management?
I had this plan two or three years before I stopped so I got involved in the administrative side of the club before I stopped playing and now I never stop working. I just want to go to the next level, to develop the club and maybe to help my country with my experience. Hopefully we can all go far together.

How far is Asian football behind the European game?
In the Middle East we are always late, but with the relationships I have got with people in Europe we are trying to get the good things, the things that always make football better. We never stop looking. The small details are what make the difference and that's what we have to work on. Clubs in Europe always have something new and we have to learn from them and that's what I'm trying to do. Now, the big clubs in Saudi Arabia have really big sponsors who support them so there's more money in the game. It's a challenge, an awesome challenge.

So it's a bigger challenge than anything you had to do as a player?
When I was a player we had challenges, but this is on a bigger scale. I have no time for my family, my own business or things like that. When you are passionate about a club you do it. I'm looking forward to being able to go to a higher level. When you learn more, you never know what will happen. You always have to look forward to reach your goals.

> **It's all about the small details**

What can you learn from European clubs?
When you go to big clubs like Real Madrid or Bayern Munich and you have contact with them, you know what they want to do, what their strategy is for the whole year. And that's why these clubs are at the top. They never stop. The people behind the scenes are the reason these clubs stay at the top. It's all about the small details.

And it sounds like you're involved in every detail of running the club...
There are so many things we have to do. There's always work to be done. For three years I didn't have a vacation with my family and now I have to prepare for the next four or five years, for the players, for the technical staff, the medical staff and all of that comes together. If anything is missing it's very difficult for the club. We have to prepare everything, we have to follow everything up and you can't afford to forget even one thing.

What are the targets for Al Hilal?
Al Hilal haven't reach the Final of the Asian Champions League since it started in 2002. But our target is to go to the highest level, to play against the best teams at the Club World Cup and to also keep winning all the competitions in Saudi Arabia.

Michael Church

Treble...Al Jaber scores in his third World Cup, against Tunisia in 2006

2003

Under the headline 'The man from nowhere", Gavin Hamilton introduced *World Soccer* readers to a rich Russian in south-west London: 'Virtually overnight, Roman Abramovich has become one of the most powerful men in European football. His £140million acquisition of Chelsea and additional £80m (so far) on players, is unprecedented in world football. Nobody anywhere has ever spent so much money, so quickly, on a football club.

"The great irony is that Abramovich should settle on Chelsea, having also considered Manchester United and Tottenham. Chelsea, the great underachievers of English football, the King's Road playboys with just one League title, in 1955, to their name. The club who have turned flattering to deceive into an art form.

"His investment – 'for as long as it takes,' he says – could turn out to be one of the most significant developments in the history of the game."

worldmags

Hakan SUKUR

Galatasaray, Torino & Turkey

A prolific marksman who is still his country's record international goalscorer – and scored the quickest ever World Cup goal

WHAT ARE YOU doing these days?
I'm taking my coaching diploma on a fast-track course organised by the Turkish federation. I'm planning to go to England to learn a little more English. I've rented a house in London and I've found an international school for my children. I want to visit clubs like Arsenal to watch coaches like Arsene Wenger and see how they work.

Do you have a coaching philosophy?
I like coaches who play an attacking style. Although I was a striker I realise that football is not only about scoring. Defence is important and I plan to follow coaches who can teach me about defending.

You've stayed fit. Do you still play?
I do kinetics with a personal trainer. I spent a lot on suits when I was in Italy and I want them to still fit me!

Would it be easier to start as a coach with a top club?
I don't need a big club to start with as I want a long career. Sometimes it is not easy to work at big clubs, but even at an average club you can have a good adventure. So I'm simply seeking a club that is hungry for success.

Who are your favourite strikers right now?
Didier Drogba, as he uses his physique very well. In football there are different types of striker. When you look at Barcelona, they have different forwards; Messi is different to the others, and that makes them better as a team.

Any regrets about your career?
No, no regrets. I have lots of good memories. But when I went to Inter, I almost joined Milan. It didn't happen and because of the rivalry I have not told people about it before. It's not a regret, more of a missed opportunity. It was good to play for Inter, and I made many good friendships there.

Keeping his eyes on the ball...Sukur

"It was good to play for Inter, and I made many good friends there"

How did you view your time at Inter?
I see it as successful but some people say it was not. They expect you to score every game. I went to Inter after scoring 38 goals in the Turkish league. I joined a club with a coach who cared about me [Marcello Lippi] but after one game he disappeared. Then you are alone, with another coach. I had a hard time.

How do you explain the fluctuating fortunes of the Turkey national team?
With difficulty. They have some great players but we never seem to be able to build on our success. It happened after the 2002 World Cup and again after the 2008 European Championship.

You scored the quickest goal in World Cup history, after 11 seconds of the third-place play-off match against South Korea...
Actually, it was a goal that was late for me...because it was the first goal I had scored in the tournament!

Why have Turkish teams not been successful in the Champions League?
Our fans can't wait for success. They want it immediately, so clubs feel the pressure and change trainers, players, every year, and there is no continuity. Without stability, you cannot have success. In Turkey we have good players but you need foreign players to stay for four or five years, and you need a coach who stays too. We had that with Galatasaray in 2000, with Hagi, Fatih Terim and others. We'd been together for four years. A negative example is Fenerbahce, who had a great team when they played Chelsea in the quarter-finals. They lost, so they fired the coach [Zico] and changed the players.

Is there too much pressure in Turkey?
It's difficult. I've studied psychology. Sometimes when one finger is pointing one way, the other three fingers are pointing at yourself. Sometimes you have to look elsewhere. In Turkey people are searching for different things. Fenerbahce must win the league every year, Galatasaray must win the league every year and Hakan Sukur must score every game. That is the pressure.

So clubs need sensible directors?
Armies need generals, but they need soldiers too. Everything takes time. The mentality of Turkish football is not as strong as the rest of Europe. They are too impatient. They need to give foreign players the idea that they can achieve things in Turkey. Most of the foreign players come here just to earn money.

Do you want to work abroad?
Yes, that's my plan. Not necessarily in the English Premier League; it could be taking a [Championship] team into the top flight. My world is small. It could be anywhere. Global football is changing, Turkish fans will have to understand that I may have to work abroad. Every country is like our country, the world is getting smaller. I've never thought about working in this country or that country, just about doing my job.

Mehmet Demircan

● 2004

As Diego Maradona was reported to be at death's door, Eric Weil wrote from Buenos Aires: "In Argentina, heroes are in short supply. There are no political figures for the people to look up to, no war heroes, no royal family to revere. So they look up to their sports heroes. There is none greater, in their eyes, than Diego Maradona. When the 43-year-old was suddenly taken ill on April 18, hundreds of fans descended on the Sanz Argentina Hospital in the centre of Buenos Aires. They posted get-well-soon notes on the walls and had to be asked to stop chanting to allow their idol some peace.

"Doctors in Cuba, where he had been in drug rehabilitation for the past four years, claimed his health had stabilised when he left to return to Buenos Aires. A big mistake. [After attending a Boca game and a friend's barbecue] he was rushed to hospital. Once there he was immediately put in intensive care on an artificial respirator. If Maradona had not been put on a resoirator so quickly he would probably be dead."

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Ali DAEI

Persepolis, Hertha Berlin & Iran
The world's leading international goalscorer, with 109 goals in 149 appearances

ARE YOU HAPPY that you played in your era and not today?
I am happy to have played when I did, but overall I do miss my playing days.

Are players today paid too much?
Money, advertising and the general commercialisation of football is increasing all the time and football is no longer just a sport. The income of today's players is not comparable with players of previous generations. I think players are generally paid too much today; to be honest, way over their worth. A top player in England is paid many times more than the most influential politicians. It is now the same all over the world. People look at football in a different light today and football has in a way become a useful common international language that politicians, among others, can utilise.

What is your fondest memory from your playing days?
I have had some memorable individual achievements during my career but, as football is a team sport, my fondest memory in football has to be the qualifying play-off match for the 1998 World Cup, where we overcame Australia. On that night our team created an unforgettable, euphoric party for our nation.

If you could rerun your career, would you have done anything differently?
I would obviously not repeat any of the mistakes, big or small, that I might have done during my career. But on specifics, I would have liked to reach European football earlier than I did. I would have probably also considered my club selections differently during the tail end of my career. While I was at Hertha Berlin, Chelsea were interested in me, and at the end of my playing days in Germany, when I decided to take the offer of playing in UAE, I still had offers from the likes of Nurnberg to carry on playing in the Bundesliga. More recently at the beginning of my managerial career as the national team manager of Iran, if I had known the shambolic state of our football federation, even with the weight of patriotic duty which I always have towards our national team, I would have never taken up the post.

Team player...club and country achievements meant more than individual honours

"Our team created a euphoric party for Iran"

Victory...Daei after beating Australia

What has been the biggest change in football since you stopped playing?
Not much, in the short space of time since my retirement from playing, though generally the number of strikers in most team starting line-ups has dropped. In the peak days of my career, each team would have had two, sometimes three strikers. These days, good classic centre-forwards, with excellent heading abilities, have become rare items in the big teams across the globe.

Which players in the past 50 years have you most admired?
I consider Pele, Maradona and Messi out of this world. But for me Van Basten was a role model.

Is football better today than in your era?
The overall quality of football today is superior to previous eras. Football has become much more of a tactical game.

Who was the biggest influence in your career?
My family. My parents and my elder brother have provided the biggest influence and support throughout my career. Coming from a large, working-class family in a small town, I learned not to give up and take my chances. After I left home, the family support never ceased and by then I was totally determined to succeed.

Adel Ferdowsipour

2005

Keir Radnedge was in Istanbul to witness one of the most dramatic comebacks in the history of European club football. He wrote: "Morning in Istanbul before the match and Liverpool fans are straggling along the river front, their glazed expressions either a product of a long night on the town or disbelief at being in the Champions League Final at all.

"Next morning, the same fans, the same glazed expressions, this time painted in sheer wonder of the events of the night before. The die is already cast for the legend: Liverpool's fifth Champions Cup secured by one of the most stirring comebacks in the history of Europe's most prestigious club event.

"At half-time Milan (3-0 up) were already celebrating as Liverpool, through a mixture of design and accident, came up with the team that might have been expected to start the game. The reward was a record-breaking recovery of three goals in six magical minutes."

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Pavel NEDVED

Juventus & Czech Republic

One of his country's greatest-ever players, he moved to Italy and won the scudetto with two different clubs

ARE YOU HAPPY you played in your era and not today?

I was lucky to have played when I did. If I'd been born, say a decade earlier, I'd have been in my prime under the communist regime in the old Czechoslovakia and there's no way the authorities would have allowed me to move abroad before reaching the veteran stage. After the "Velvet Revolution" I was able to leave Sparta Prague for Lazio at the age of 24. I'm thankful the doors were opened for my generation and myself.

Are players today paid too much?

It's a matter of supply and demand. Top footballers are entertainers, like pop stars and actors. The rewards can be immense, but it's a profession not without its risks and careers can be cut short in a moment.

What is your fondest memory from your playing days?

Each one of my Serie A titles [2000 with Lazio, and 2002 and 2003 at Juventus] were times of intense satisfaction for me. So were Lazio's Italian Cup and Cup-winners Cup successes. Although we lost to Germany in the Final, Euro 96 was a fantastic tournament for both the Czech side and me personally. Being voted European player of the year in 2003 was a huge honour, but for me, team prizes must always come first.

What was the biggest disappointment of your career?

Undoubtedly Juve's punishment by relegation to Serie B in 2006. I found it a complete injustice. No one can say we won those Italian titles thanks to plots behind the scenes. We weren't aided. We were just too strong for the rest of the league.

Which goals stand out for you?

One at Euro 96 which put us on the road to beating Italy. It made my name in Italian circles and soon after I was off to Serie A.

Focused...Nedved never settled for the bare minimum

> **"For me, team prizes must come first"**

If you could rerun your career would you have done anything differently?

Try not to have been booked in the Champions League semi against Real Madrid in 2003. I was suspended for the Final, Juve losing on penalties to Milan in Manchester. To miss out on that game was terrible.

How different was your era from today?

Football in the early part of my career was relatively simple: you trained, you played. But as in all walks of life, nothing stands still. Match preparation became high-tech and every club now has a backroom staff crammed with specialists; a sort of NASA.

What's been the secret of your success?

My ambition and drive. I was never content with just the bare minimum. I wanted to go as far in the game as I could and nothing was going to stop me. After training at Dukla Prague, I'd go running rather than hit the town. My team-mates thought I was crazy.

Which players in the past 50 years have you most admired?

When I was a kid I was a fan of Manchester United and was bewitched by guys like Cantona and Bryan Robson. In Italy I've had the good fortune to rub shoulders with some of the all-time greats: Zidane, Totti, Del Piero, Ronaldo.

Who was the biggest influence on your career?

Coaches such as Eriksson, Zoff, Ranieri and Deschamps all shaped me. Fabio Capello was an outstanding guide too. But the most important was Marcello Lippi, who gave me all the freedom I needed.

John Holmesdale

● 2006

In his last-ever game, Zinedine Zidane was sent off in the World Cup Final. Keir Radnedge wrote: "Any other exit would have been preferable. If Zinedine Zidane had missed the decisive penalty in the shoot-out the world game would have thrown down its regrets but still remembered the genius of achievement in 1998 and 2000 with France and in 2002 with Real Madrid.

"If Zidane had missed the Final through injury or suspension it would not have affected his reputation. But getting sent off for a head-butt, 10 minutes from the end of extra-time in his very last game? Sad. But maybe not surprising.

"Before the Final, Zidane had been sent off 13 times, the first in 1993, an average of one per year. Yet he had not been dismissed since 2005. Statistically, the red against Italy was overdue.

"His excuses are immaterial. The damage of that image, flashed around the world, has been done."

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Andriy SHEVCHENKO

Dynamo Kyiv, Milan, Chelsea & Ukraine
Former European footballer of the year who has been successful in the Champions League, Serie A and England

YOU'VE BEEN PLAYING at the highest level for more than 15 years. What does the beautiful game mean for you?
You know, football gives me everything. Energy, pleasure, emotions. Even now [at 34] I have a great desire to win every match. I'll do my best to be on the winning side even during training or playing with friends on the beach. For me football is a game of winners. You can't win the game without the psychology of the winner. I've been taught this from my first days at the Kyiv Dynamo academy. It has been the ideology of the club since the days of legendary coach Valeriy Lobanovskyi.

What did you learn from Lobanovskyi?
I was very young when I met him. He made a huge impression on me. The more I worked under him, the more I failed to understand the view of him portrayed by the media: the "iron man". Lobanovskyi, or Vasylyovych [his second name] as the players called him, was a very well-educated man. He was quite strict in training sessions but had a perfect sense of humour. He was more than 100 per cent assured in all that he did and had complete confidence to convey his ideas to the players. That was the most important thing that I learned from him. The result can be achieved only if you believe in yourself. Lobanovskyi's influence on me was so strong that after his tragic death he appeared in my dreams.

What was the kind of football favoured by Lobanovskyi?
His training methods and ideas were definitely ahead of their time. He divided the players into defenders and attackers. He liked fully accomplished players. His coaching talent was in finding and developing the key skills of every player and using them to benefit the whole team. From me he required utility – being equally adept at pressing, tackling, shooting and constantly reading the game by selecting the best position on the field. That helped me enormously when I moved to my first big foreign club, Milan.

I've played under some great coaches – each gave me something from their soul

Shevchenko's early mentor...Lobanovskyi

What was his football dream?
Winning the Champions League. Unfortunately Dynamo stopped one step from the Final in 1999. So, when I won the great trophy with Milan in 2004 I took the Cup to Kyiv.

Which player have you most admired?
The great Dynamo forward Oleg Blokhin. He had unbelievable pace. I saw him on the field in one of his last seasons in a Dynamo shirt – a clear leader, dictating the pace, feeding his team-mates and scoring magnificent goals. I'm also very glad that under his guidance I played in Ukraine colours and reached the World Cup finals in 2006. We have a lot in common and remain friends.

What about your coaches at Kyiv?
I've played under some great coaches. Each gave me something from their soul. My first coach, Alexander Shpakov, discovered me playing in the street and persuaded my parents that football was my destiny. Thanks to Yozhef Sabo I was promoted from the reserves to the first team. Dynamo had many experienced players at that time but Sabo staked his reputation on the promising graduates of the Dynamo academy, including me. Then there was Lobanovskyi.

Your first coach abroad was Alberto Zaccheroni...
He helped me adapt painlessly at Milan. Alberto is crazy about football and thinks about the game day and night.

What about Carlo Ancelotti?
A great man and football coach. I've talked with him many times on different topics and that helped me a lot in the difficult periods of my career in Milan. I'm not surprised he won the English Premier League in his first season with Chelsea. He listens to the players – a rare virtue among modern coaches.

Is Jose Mourinho as intimidating as he is portrayed in the media?
I don't think so. A strong personality, yes, but we always found a common language. Jose's a great motivator and has achieved success at his clubs thanks to his ability to unite and motivate the players. He's very precise. He was totally right when he told me that I'd only play if I was completely fit. For example in December 2006 I practically did not play. He gave me time for recovery. I trained hard and was able to show good quality football in the last three months of the season – only to get injured again. Truly, my career in Chelsea was ruined by numerous injuries and definitely not by Jose.

What is the difference in the football cultures of Italy and England?
The game in Italy is more tactical. In England it's quicker and the players have a huge desire to battle for the ball all over the field. I was impressed by the gentlemanly behaviour of the fans in the English stadiums. The relationship between the public and the players is part of the performance.

How has your relationship been with fans?
I'm very grateful to all of them. Every time I enter the field I feel their support. I'm lucky too because victory is the most important thing in football. Many famous players end their careers without trophies. As for me, I nearly fulfilled all my professional dreams by winning everything in Ukraine, Serie A and Champions League. I was named European Player of the Year as well as playing at the World Cup finals. But my adventure in football isn't finished yet. I dream to give to my country the final salute during the Euro 2012 finals.

Oleg Zadernowsky

2007

World Soccer **looked into its crystal ball in November 2007 to predict the next generation of '50 most exciting teenagers'. Here are some we selected:**

Sergio Aguero: "Was top scorer and named player of the tournament as Argentina won the Under-20 World Cup. Now playing alongside Diego Forlan (for Atletico Madrid) and given the freedom of a central role he has been one of La Liga's outstanding performers..."

Karim Benzema: "The 19-year-old is reminiscent of a young and hungry Ronaldo – the same physical strength, explosive acceleration and glacial, almost insolent finishing. Whatever Benzema's choice of weapon – the audacious lob, delicate chip, full-blooded drive or crafty toe-poke – he delivers with a remarkable swagger."

Mesut Ozil: "A ball-playing, old-school No 10, brimming with audacious tricks."

Theo Walcott: "Surely his day at the highest level will come soon – he has too much pace and skill for it not to."

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RAUL

Real Madrid & Spain

Spain's joint-all-time top scorer, who also holds the goals and appearance records for Real Madrid

IF YOU COULD RERUN your career, would you do anything differently?
It would be churlish to say yes. I spent 18 years at Real Madrid, a world football institution, and while there fully satisfied all my ambitions, with Spanish, European and world titles. What more could I have asked for? Those able to call Bernabeu home are a privileged number.

And yet you started out at Real's arch-rivals Atletico...
Exactly. I came from a passionate family of Atletico supporters and played for them as a schoolboy. Unfortunately the club was not in good financial shape and president Jesus Gil decided to close down the junior sides. I was 15 and wondered what my next move would be. Then Real picked me up. I was in heaven.

No Real player has appeared in more games or scored more goals. Do you consider yourself a club legend?
That's for others to comment on, not me. For me the word "legend" is used with someone who is distant and unapproachable. That's not how I see myself. I'm just glad I was able to write a page or two of history at Real. I'm now in Germany with Schalke, I've a new sporting life, but I trust I always will be thought of as a Real standard-bearer. Like Maldini at Milan, Scholes and Giggs at Manchester United, Totti at Roma and Del Piero at Juventus.

What is your fondest memory?
I'm very nostalgic about my earliest times as a professional. I can remember the moment I heard I was going to make my Real first-team debut like it was yesterday. I was floating on air after being told by coach Jorge Valdano that I would be starting in a game in Zaragoza. I just had time to go home and tell my parents before catching the team bus.

Bernabeu hero...Raul

"When Real picked me up I was in heaven"

Zaragoza beat us, but I kept my place and the following week scored in a 4-2 win in the derby against Atletico. The crowd at the Bernabeu gave me an ovation when I was substituted.

Which goals mean the most to you?
I prefer the ones I came up with on the big occasion: one in the Club World Cup in 1998 when we beat Vasco da Gama, a double which gave us a 2-2 draw with Barcelona at the Camp Nou [1999] and the two I scored in a 3-2 win at Manchester United in the Champions League [2000].

How has the game evolved since you started playing?
Tactically everybody has moved up to another level. Even the theoretically weak are now cleverly organised.

Critics have no problem pointing out that Spain have become world and European champions without you. Does such a comment hurt?
I don't want to enter into an argument. As a patriotic Spaniard I'm delighted to see us on top. In my time as an international we did not do ourselves justice in major tournaments. Simple as that, though I thought we were treated unfairly by the officials when we lost to South Korea on penalties in the 2002 World Cup. Generally I have to be proud of what I achieved with the national team. I managed to play in three World Cups, appeared in a hundred plus games and scored plenty of goals.

Which player in the past 50 years have you most admired?
Thanks to film clips I've been able to fall in love with the Real greats like Di Stefano, Puskas and Gento. Growing up I was fascinated by the skills of Maradona, Baggio and Van Basten.

Which teams do you think played the best football ever?
The brilliant Real XI of the late 1950s and early 1960s; the Brazil of the 1970 and 1986 World Cups. The great Milan side of the late 1980s.

Who was the biggest influence on your career?
Ex-Real coach Fabio Capello. I was still a teenager with several rough edges to my game when he turned up. I needed someone to take me in hand, to show me right from wrong, and he was the man. I've great affection towards him. He brought innovation to Real, a different way of training and seeing the game. And above all, he was a winner from top to bottom.

Nick Bidwell

● 2008

LDU Quito defeated Fluminense on penalties, to become the first club from Ecuador to win the Libertadores Cup. Tim Vickery wrote: "The Brazilian press were almost unanimous that LDU goalkeeper Jose Cevallos would prove his team's weak point – but the veteran had the last laugh.

"Flu won 3-1 on the night to take the tie to penalties, but Cevallos saved three of the host's four kicks to help bring his side a 3-1 shoot-out victory.

"The vital moment came when Neves stepped up to take Fluminense's second [penalty]. As Neves ran in, Cevallos wandered out of his goal protesting about the amount of time being used to take the kick [which with an unguarded net would have to be retaken].

"Neves' concentration had been shaken and indecision crept into his mind. He assumed Cevallos would dive left, so struck a horribly weak shot down the middle, which an uncommitted Cevallos swatted away."

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PELE

Santos & Brazil
World Cup winner in 1958, 1962 and 1970, plus numerous other titles with Santos

Simply the best...Pele in action in May 1960

WAS THE 1970 World Cup win, in Mexico, your best memory?
In fact, some of my fondest memories are from the 1958 World Cup in Sweden when I was still only 17. After we won I wanted to call my mother but I couldn't find a phone and I had to wait for the next day. Today the guys just pick up their cell phones and that's it. It's nice but it's too easy, really.

Was it easy in 1970 with all those great players?
We did have outstanding technical players such as Rivelino, Tostao, Gerson and Jairzinho but, people don't realise, when we lost the ball only Jairzinho stayed up in attack. Everyone else fell back. That was the secret of our success: we played as a team. Everybody forgets about that because nowadays all you see of 1970 are the goals. You do not see the work behind them.

Has money spoiled the game?
The amount guys can earn now in two or three years is more than all the money I earned in nearly 30 years. That's brought a lot of big companies into football and television now is totally different. Then it was only starting, now it's taken over the world. But the game as such has not changed that much. It's harder because there is more at stake but what mattered most then and what matters most now is the same thing: good players.

Keir Radnedge

● *Pele featured in the first-ever edition of World Soccer in October 1960, under the headline 'BOY WONDER'. "This young man, wrote Eric Batty, "has a most unlikely name, Edson Arantes do Nascimento, but as 'Pele' he has been feted around the world."*

BOY WONDER

● 2009

Nobody can deny that 2009 belonged to Barcelona as they won a record six trophies in one season. Keir Radnedge, in Rome to see Barca claim the Champions League, wrote: "Barcelona's motto describes them as 'more than a club'. They were certainly more of a team than outgoing holders Manchester United. In effect the game was nine minutes of Manchester United and then 81 minutes of Barcelona.

"Barcelona's victory was a rewarding one for those who still believe in the ultimate purity of football. The best team won – and they were the best team because they played the finest, most attractive yet effective football. Unfortunately it may not last as Barcelona are renowned as a club with a tradition of impatience, political manoeuvring and transfer misjudgments to compare with any other major club across the world. But for now, salute what the remarkable [coach] Pep Guardiola has achieved. There can never be another season like it....for him or his club."

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Crunch game

Fluminense defender Julio Cesar (right) makes his presence felt in the battle at the top of the Brazilian championship as he challenges Corinthians' Iarley at the Estadio Olimpico Joao Havelange in Rio de Janeiro. More information page 122.

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Stepped down...Stoilov

BULGARIA

Coach quits after losses

Stanimir Stoilov resigned as coach of the national team after Montenegro inflicted the country's second successive loss in the Euro 2012 qualifiers.

Elsad Zverotic clinched a 1-0 victory for Montenegro with a long-range strike in the 36th minute, four days after Bulgaria were thrashed 4-0 by England. The 43-year-old Stoilov complained that the international retirement of Manchester United striker Dimitar Berbatov had left a big void up front in his team.

CAPE VERDE

Sharks cause upset

The former Portuguese colony, who have never managed to qualify for any major tournament before, caused a big upset as they beat Mali 1-0 in their opening African Nations Cup qualifier.

Toni Varela, who plays his club football in Holland with Waalwijk, scored the winning goal for the side known as "the Blue Sharks".

COMOROS

Delaying the inevitable

Made up of a group of islands off south-east Africa and competing in the African Nations Cup group qualifiers for first time, Comoros debut in Zambia was delayed by 24 hours following the late arrival of the Eritrean match officials.

However, when the game did eventually get underway, the international rookies' worst fears were confirmed and they were downed by goals from Rainford Kalaba, Fwayo Tembo, James Chamanga and Emmanuel Mayuka.

RESULTS

EURO 2012 QUALIFIERS

Group A

Sep 3 - Brussels
Belgium 0
Germany 1 (Klose 51)
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 47,000. **Ref:** Hauge (Nor)
Belgium: Bailly - Alderweireld, Van Buyten, Kompany, Vermaelen, Simons (Vossen 83), Hazard (Defour 73), Fellaini, Vertonghen, Dembele, Lukaku (Benteke 73).
Germany: Neuer - Lahm, Mertesacker, Badstuber, Jansen (Westermann 46), Khedira, Schweinsteiger, Muller, Ozil (Cacau 88), Podolski (Kroos 70), Klose.

Sep 3 - Astana
Kazakhstan 0
Turkey 3 (Arda 24, Hamit Altintop 26, Nihat 75)
HT: 0-2. **Att:** 15,800. **Ref:** Vad (Hun)
Kazakhstan: Sidelnikov - Abdulin, Kirov, Kislitsyn (Rozhkov 85), Popov, Karpovich (Rodionov 64), Nurgaliyev, Shmidtgal, Zhumaskaliyev, Azovski, Ostapenko (Maltsev 72).
Turkey: Onur - Sabri, Servet, Omer, Hakan Balta, Hamit Altintop, Emre Belozoglu, Mehmet Aurelio (Kazim-Richards 89), Arda, Nihat (Selcuk Inan 82), Tuncay (Halil Altintop 80).

Sep 7 - Salzburg
Austria 2 (Linz 90+1, Hoffer 90+2)
Kazakhstan 0
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 22,500. **Ref:** Strahonja (Cro)
Austria: Macho - Dag, Prodi, Pogatetz, Fuchs, Harnik (Hoffer 66), Kaviak, Schiemer, Jantscher (Alaba 66), Linz, Janko (Maierhofer 78).
Kazakhstan: Sidelnikov - Kislitsyn (Rozhkov 75), Abdulin, Popov, Kirov, Karpovich, Geteriyev, Nurgaliyev (Azovski 59), Zhumaskaliyev, Averchenko, Maltsev (Khizhnichenko 46).

Sep 7 - Cologne
Germany 6 (Westermann 28, Podolski 45+1, Klose 45+2, 90+2, R F Sadygov og 53, Badstuber 86)
Azerbaijan 1 (Javadov 57)
HT: 3-0. **Att:** 43,751. **Ref:** Strombergsson (Swe)
Germany: Neuer - Riether, Mertesacker (Westermann 11), Badstuber, Lahm, Khedira, Schweinsteiger (Cacau 78), Muller (Marin 62), Ozil, Podolski, Klose.
Azerbaijan: Agayev - Medvedev, Yunisoglu (V Huseynov 56), R F Sadygov, Melikov, Allahverdiyev, Shukurov, Chertoganov (R A Sadygov 64), S Abbasov, Nadyrov (Abdullayev 85), Javadov.

Sep 7 - Istanbul
Turkey 3 (Hamit Altintop 48, Semih 66, Arda 78)
Belgium 2 (Van Buyten 28, 69)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 41,338. **Ref:** Skomina (Sln)
Turkey: Onur - Sabri (Gokhan Gonul 73), Servet, Omer, Ismail, Hamit Altintop, Mehmet Aurelio, Selcuk Inan (Semih 46), Tuncay (Selcuk Sahin 82), Emre Belozoglu, Arda.
Belgium: Bailly - Alderweireld, Kompany, Van Buyten, Vermaelen, G Gillet (Hazard 82), Fellaini, Simons, Vertonghen, Dembele (Mirallas 64), Lukaku (Witsel 76). *Sent off: Kompany 64min.*

EURO 2012 QUALIFIERS – GROUP A

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Germany	2	2	0	0	7	1	6
Turkey	2	2	0	0	6	2	6
Austria	1	1	0	0	2	0	3
Belgium	2	0	0	2	2	4	0
Azerbaijan	1	0	0	1	1	6	0
Kazakhstan	2	0	0	2	0	5	0

03.09.10	Belgium v Germany	0-1
03.09.10	Kazakhstan v Turkey	0-3
07.09.10	Austria v Kazakhstan	2-0
07.09.10	Germany v Azerbaijan	6-1
07.09.10	Turkey v Belgium	3-2
08.10.10	Austria v Azerbaijan	
08.10.10	Germany v Turkey	
08.10.10	Kazakhstan v Belgium	
12.10.10	Azerbaijan v Turkey	
12.10.10	Belgium v Austria	
12.10.10	Kazakhstan v Germany	
25.03.11	Austria v Belgium	
25.03.11	Germany v Kazakhstan	
29.03.11	Belgium v Azerbaijan	
29.03.11	Turkey v Austria	
03.06.11	Austria v Germany	
03.06.11	Belgium v Turkey	
03.06.11	Kazakhstan v Azerbaijan	
07.06.11	Azerbaijan v Germany	
02.09.11	Azerbaijan v Belgium	
02.09.11	Germany v Austria	
02.09.11	Turkey v Kazakhstan	
06.09.11	Austria v Turkey	
06.09.11	Azerbaijan v Kazakhstan	
07.10.11	Azerbaijan v Austria	
07.10.11	Belgium v Kazakhstan	
07.10.11	Turkey v Germany	
11.10.11	Germany v Belgium	
11.10.11	Kazakhstan v Austria	
11.10.11	Turkey v Azerbaijan	

Group B

Sep 3 - Andorra La Vella
Andorra 0
Russia 2 (Pogrebnyak 14, pen 64)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 250. **Ref:** Borg (Mlt)
Andorra: Gomes - Rubio (Lorenzo 58), Bernaus, I Lima, C Martinez, Ayala, Pujol (Mejias 89), Vieira, Moreno (Jimenez 76), Silva, Gomez.
Russia: Akinfeev - Anyukov, Ignashevich, V Berezutsky, Bilyaletdinov, Zyryanov, Shirokov, Semshov, Bystrov (Dzagoev 61), Pogrebnyak (Pavlyuchenko 86), Arshavin.

Sep 3 - Yerevan
Armenia 0
Republic of Ireland 1 (Fahey 76)
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 8,682. **Ref:** Szabo (Hun)
Armenia: Berezovsky - Hovsepyan, Arzumanyan, K Mkrtchyan, Arakelyan, Grygoryan (Hambardzumyan 71), Artur Edigaryan (Manoyan 68), Malakyan (Manucharyan 79), Pachajyan, Movsisyan, Henrikh Mkhitaryan.
Rep Ireland: Given - O'Shea, St Ledger, Dunne, Kilbane, Lawrence, Whelan, Green, McGeady (Fahey 68), Keane (Keogh 85), Doyle.

Sep 3 - Bratislava
Slovakia 1 (Holosko 90+1)
Macedonia 0
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 5,980. **Ref:** Circhetta (Swi)
Slovakia: Mucha - Pekarik (Sylvestr 90), Skrtel, Salata (Kucka 76), Hubocan, Strba, Weiss (Jendrisek 61), Hamsik, Sapara, Stoch, Holosko.
Macedonia: Nuredinovski - Popov, Sikov, I Mitreski, Noveski, Despotovski (Lazevski 73), Naumoski (Ristic 61), Georgievski, Sumulikoski, Trickovski (Grncarov 80), Pandev. *Sent off: Sikov 85min.*

Sep 7 - Skopje
Macedonia 2 (Gjurovski 42, Naumoski pen 90+6)
Armenia 2 (Movsisyan 41, Manucharyan 90+1)
HT: 1-1. **Att:** 9,000. **Ref:** Berntsen (Nor)
Macedonia: Nuredinovski - Todorovski, Popov, Noveski, I Mitreski, Georgievski (Despotovski 67), Trickovski, Sumulikoski, Ristic (Naumoski 62), Pandev, Gjurovski (Ililjoski 75).
Armenia: Berezovsky - K Mkrtchyan (Mkoyan 90+2), Hovsepyan, Arzumanyan, Arakelyan, Manoyan, Malakyan (Manucharyan 60), Movsisyan, Pachajyan (Artur Edigaryan 70), Artak Edigaryan, Henrikh Mkhitaryan.

Sep 7 - Dublin
Republic of Ireland 3 (Kilbane 15, Doyle 41, Keane 55)
Andorra 1 (C Martinez 45)
HT: 2-1. **Att:** 39,206. **Ref:** Trattou (Cyp)
Rep Ireland: Given - O'Shea (Kelly 75), St Ledger, Dunne, Kilbane, Lawrence, Whelan (Gibson 61), Green, McGeady, Doyle (Keogh 82), Keane.
Andorra: Gomes - C Martinez, Silva, I Lima, Bernaus, Escura, Vieira, Ayala (Andorra 71), Moreno (Jimenez 58), Pujol (Sonejee 86), Gomez.

Sep 7 - Moscow
Russia 0
Slovakia 1 (Stoch 28)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 28,000. **Ref:** De Bleeckere (Blg)
Russia: Akinfeev - Anyukov, Ignashevich (Bilyaletdinov 81), V Berezutsky, Zhirkov, Zyryanov, Shirokov, Semshov (Bystrov 61), Dzagoev, Pogrebnyak (Pavlyuchenko 71), Arshavin.
Slovakia: Mucha - Zabavnik, Skrtel, Salata, Hubocan, Karhan (Sapara 73), Strba, Hamsik, Kucka (Jendrisek 58), Stoch (Pecalka 90+2), Holosko.

EURO 2012 QUALIFIERS – GROUP B

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Rep Ireland	2	2	0	0	4	1	6
Slovakia	2	2	0	0	2	0	6
Russia	2	1	0	1	2	1	3
Armenia	2	0	1	1	2	3	1
Macedonia	2	0	1	1	2	3	1
Andorra	2	0	0	2	1	5	0

03.09.10	Andorra v Russia	0-2
03.09.10	Armenia v Rep of Ireland	0-1
03.09.10	Slovakia v Macedonia	1-0
07.09.10	Macedonia v Armenia	2-2
07.09.10	Rep of Ireland v Andorra	3-1
07.09.10	Russia v Slovakia	0-1
08.10.10	Andorra v Macedonia	
08.10.10	Armenia v Slovakia	
08.10.10	Rep of Ireland v Russia	
12.10.10	Armenia v Andorra	
12.10.10	Macedonia v Russia	
12.10.10	Slovakia v Rep of Ireland	
26.03.11	Andorra v Slovakia	
26.03.11	Armenia v Russia	
26.03.11	Rep of Ireland v Macedonia	
04.06.11	Macedonia v Rep of Ireland	
04.06.11	Russia v Armenia	
04.06.11	Slovakia v Andorra	
02.09.11	Andorra v Armenia	
02.09.11	Rep of Ireland v Slovakia	
02.09.11	Russia v Macedonia	
06.09.11	Macedonia v Andorra	
06.09.11	Russia v Rep of Ireland	
06.09.11	Slovakia v Armenia	
07.10.11	Andorra v Rep of Ireland	
07.10.11	Armenia v Macedonia	
07.10.11	Slovakia v Russia	
11.10.11	Macedonia v Slovakia	
11.10.11	Rep of Ireland v Armenia	
11.10.11	Russia v Andorra	

Group C

Sep 3 - Tallinn
Estonia 1 (Zenjov 31)
Italy 2 (Cassano 60, Bonucci 63)
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 9,550. **Ref:** Velasco Carballo (Spa)
Estonia: Pareiko - Enar Jaager, Rahn, Piiroja, Klavan, S Puri (Purje 77), Dmitrijev, Vunk, Kruglov (Kink 82), Vassiljev, Zenjov (Saag 63).
Italy: Sirigu - Cassani, Bonucci, Chiellini, Molinaro, Montolivo (Palombo 75), Pirlo, De Rossi, Pepe (Quagliarella 60), Pazzini, Cassano (Antonelli 80).

Sep 3 - Torshavn
Faroe Islands 0
Serbia 3 (Lazovic 14, Stankovic 18, Zigic 90+1)
HT: 0-2. **Att:** 1,500. **Ref:** Toussaint (Lux)
Faroe Islands: Gunnar Nielsen - Naes, Benjaminsen, Davidsen, Gregersen, Udsen (Mouritsen 46), S Samuelsen, Jann Petersen (Justinus Hansen 73), Edmundsson, Holst (A Hansen 79), Rubeksen.
Serbia: Djuricic - Rukavina, Vidic, Subotic, Obradovic (Lukovic 46), Kuzmanovic, Stankovic (Petrovic 58), Krasic, Lazovic (Ninkovic 83), Zigic, Jovanovic.

Sep 3 - Maribor
Slovenia 0
Northern Ireland 1 (C Evans 70)
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 11,582. **Ref:** Balaj (Rom)
Slovenia: S Handanovic - Brecko, Cesar, M Mavric, Jokic, Birsa, Koren, Radosavljevic, Kirm (Ilicic 74), Novakovic (Dedic 74), Ljubijankic (Matavz 88).
Northern Ireland: Taylor - McAuley, Cathcart, Craigan, Baird, Davis, McCann (C Evans 67), A Hughes, Healy (Lafferty 67), Feeney, Brunt (Gorman 89).

Sep 7 - Florence
Italy 5 (Gilardino 12, Rossi 21, Cassano 27, Quagliarella 81, Pirlo 90)
Faroe Islands 0
HT: 3-0. **Att:** 19,266. **Ref:** Kulbakov (Bls)
Italy: Viviano - De Silvestri, Bonucci, Chiellini, Antonelli, Montolivo, Pirlo, De Rossi (Palombo 76), Rossi (Quagliarella 59), Gilardino (Pazzini 59), Cassano.
Faroe Islands: Gunnar Nielsen - a Bo, Lokin (Naes 75), Rubeksen, Gregersen, Davidsen, Mouritsen (Holst 74), S Samuelsen, Benjaminsen, Jann Petersen, Edmundsson (Udsen 89).

Sep 7 - Belgrade
Serbia 1 (Zigic 86)
Slovenia 1 (Novakovic 63)
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 30,000. **Ref:** Benquerenca (Por)
Serbia: Djuricic - Rukavina, Vidic, Subotic, Lukovic, Z Tosic (Krasic 46), Stankovic (Kacar 71), Kuzmanovic, Jovanovic (Ninkovic 64), Zigic, Lazovic.
Slovenia: S Handanovic - Brecko, Cesar, Jokic, M Mavric, Kirm (Stevanovic 89), Koren, Radosavljevic, Birsa (Ilicic 78), Dedic (Ljubijankic 77), Novakovic.

worldmags

CYPRUS

Eight-goal thriller

Angelos Anastasiadis' side produced a thrilling comeback to earn a 4-4 draw in Portugal in their opening European Championship qualifier.

Having lost all eight of their previous encounters with their hosts, Cyprus led twice early on, through Efstathios Aloneftis and Michalis Konstantinou, before Andreas Avraam earned the visitors a point with a last-minute header.

ETHIOPIA

Iffy start

Scotland-born Iffy Onuora suffered an international coaching debut nightmare as his Ethiopia side crumbled 4-1 at home to Guinea in their opening African Nations Cup qualifier.

French shock...Belarus celebrate

FRANCE

On the slide

Les Bleus have slipped to 27th place in the latest FIFA rankings – their lowest position since its introduction in 1993.

New coach Laurent Blanc saw his side drop six places on the back of their shameful World Cup showing and then defeat by Belarus in their opening European Championship qualifier.

Things are not much better at junior level either as France will miss out on next year's European Under-21 tournament for the third consecutive time after finishing third in their qualifying group behind Ukraine and Belgium.

The 1988 Under-21 champions are also out of contention for a spot in the 2012 Olympic tournament.

EURO 2012 QUALIFIERS – GROUP C

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Italy	2	2	0	0	7	1	6
Serbia	2	1	1	0	4	1	4
N Ireland	1	1	0	0	1	0	3
Estonia	2	1	0	1	3	3	3
Slovenia	2	0	1	1	1	2	1
Faroe Islands	3	0	0	3	1	10	0

11.08.10 Estonia v Faroe Islands 2-1
03.09.10 Estonia v Italy 1-2
03.09.10 Faroe Islands v Serbia 0-3
03.09.10 Slovenia v N Ireland 0-1
07.09.10 Italy v Faroe Islands 5-0
07.09.10 Serbia v Slovenia 1-1
08.10.10 N Ireland v Italy
08.10.10 Serbia v Estonia
08.10.10 Slovenia v Faroe Islands
12.10.10 Estonia v Slovenia
12.10.10 Faroe Islands v N Ireland
12.10.10 Italy v Serbia
25.03.11 Serbia v N Ireland
25.03.11 Slovenia v Italy
29.03.11 Estonia v Serbia
29.03.11 N Ireland v Slovenia
03.06.11 Faroe Islands v Slovenia
03.06.11 Italy v Estonia
07.06.11 Faroe Islands v Estonia
10.08.11 N Ireland v Faroe Islands
02.09.11 Faroe Islands v Italy
02.09.11 N Ireland v Serbia
02.09.11 Slovenia v Estonia
06.09.11 Estonia v N Ireland
06.09.11 Italy v Slovenia
06.09.11 Serbia v Faroe Islands
07.10.11 N Ireland v Estonia
07.10.11 Serbia v Italy
11.10.11 Italy v N Ireland
11.10.11 Slovenia v Serbia

Group D

Sep 3 - Paris
France 0
Belarus 1 (Kislyak 86)
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 76,395. **Ref:** Collum (Sco)
France: Lloris - Sagna, Rami, Mexes, Clichy, M'Vila, Menez (Saha 69; Gameiro 80), Remy (Valbuena 34), Diaby, Malouda, Hoarau.
Belarus: Zhevnov - Shitov, Martynovich, Omelyanchuk, Yurevich, V Hleb (Putsilo 89), Tigorev, Kulchy, A Hleb, Kutuzov (Kislyak 75), Rodionov (Kornilenko 85).

Sep 3 - Luxembourg
Luxembourg 0
Bosnia-Herzegovina 3 (Ibricic 6, Pjanic 12, Dzeko 16)
HT: 0-3. **Att:** 7,327. **Ref:** Banari (Mac)
Luxembourg: Joubert - Kintziger, Schnell, Hoffmann, Janisch, Mutsch, Gerson, Peters, Bettmer (Laterza 86), Collette (Da Mota 76), Bensi (Kitenge 46).
Bosnia-Herzegovina: Hasagic - Mujdza, Nadarevic, Spahic, Lulic, Rahimic (Jahic 68), Pjanic (Zec 78), Misimovic, Ibricic (Medunjanin 73), Dzeko, Ibisevic.

Sep 3 - Piatra Neamt
Romania 1 (Stancu 80)
Albania 1 (Muzaka 87)
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 13,000. **Ref:** Schorgenhofer (Aut)
Romania: Lobont - Contra (Muresan 56), Radoi, Tamas, Rat, Torje, Florescu, Deac, Cocis (Herea 77), Marica, D Niculae (Stancu 64).
Albania: Beqaj - Daliku, Cana, Curri, Vangjeli, Duro (Muzaka 81), Bulku, Lila, Agolli, Skela (Lika 79), Bogdani (Salihi 57).

Sep 7 - Tirana
Albania 1 (Salihi 37)
Luxembourg 0
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 11,800. **Ref:** Trutz (Slk)
Albania: Beqaj - Daliku, Cana, Curri, Agolli, Bulku, Duro (Lila 90+1), Skela, Muzaka (Hyka 80), Bogdani, Salihi.
Luxembourg: Joubert - Kintziger, Blaise, Schnell, Hoffmann, Peters, Laterza (Martino 81), Mutsch, Bettmer (Collette 90+1), Payal, Da Mota.
Sent off: Mutsch 58min.

Sep 7 - Minsk
Belarus 0
Romania 0
Att: 15,000. **Ref:** Kralovec (Cze)
Belarus: Zhevnov - Shitov, Martynovich, Omelyanchuk, Yurevich, V Hleb, Kislyak, Kulchy, A Hleb (Putsilo 73), Kutuzov (Krivets 87), Kornilenko (Rodionov 76).
Romania: Pantilimon - Maftei, Tamas, Chivu, Rat, Torje (Cocis 46), Radoi, Florescu, Deac (Marica 83), Stancu (D Niculae 73), Bilasco.

Sep 7 - Sarajevo
Bosnia-Herzegovina 0
France 2 (Benzema 72, Malouda 78)
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 35,000. **Ref:** Brych (Ger)
Bosnia-Herzegovina: Hasagic - Lulic, Spahic, Nadarevic, Mujdza, Ibricic, Rahimic (Zec 74), Misimovic, Pjanic, Ibisevic (Jahic 74), Dzeko.
France: Lloris - Sagna, Rami, Mexes, Clichy, Diaby, A Diarra, M'Vila, Valbuena, Benzema, Malouda (Matuidi 81).

EURO 2012 QUALIFIERS – GROUP D

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Albania	2	1	1	0	2	1	4
Belarus	2	1	1	0	1	0	4
France	2	1	0	1	2	1	3
Bosnia-Herz	2	1	0	1	3	2	3
Romania	2	0	2	0	1	1	2
Luxembourg	2	0	0	2	0	4	0

03.09.10 France v Belarus 0-1
03.09.10 Luxembourg v Bosnia-Herz 0-3
03.09.10 Romania v Albania 1-1
07.09.10 Albania v Luxembourg 1-0
07.09.10 Belarus v Romania 0-0
07.09.10 Bosnia-Herz v France 0-2
08.10.10 Albania v Bosnia-Herz
08.10.10 Luxembourg v Belarus
09.10.10 France v Romania
12.10.10 Belarus v Albania
12.10.10 France v Luxembourg
25.03.11 Luxembourg v France
26.03.11 Albania v Belarus
26.03.11 Bosnia-Herz v Romania
29.03.11 Romania v Luxembourg
03.06.11 Belarus v France
03.06.11 Romania v Bosnia-Herz
07.06.11 Belarus v Luxembourg
07.06.11 Bosnia-Herz v Albania
02.09.11 Albania v France
02.09.11 Belarus v Bosnia-Herz
02.09.11 Luxembourg v Romania
06.09.11 Bosnia-Herz v Belarus
06.09.11 Luxembourg v Albania
06.09.11 Romania v France
07.10.11 Bosnia-Herz v Luxembourg
07.10.11 France v Albania
07.10.11 Romania v Belarus
11.10.11 Albania v Romania
11.10.11 France v Bosnia-Herz

Group E

Sep 3 - Chisinau
Moldova 2 (Suvorov 69, Doros 74)
Finland 0
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 10,500. **Ref:** Malek (Pol)
Moldova: Stanislav Namasco - Bordian, Savinov, Bulgaru, Boret, Cebotaru, Epureanu, Josan (Suvorov 58), Tigirlas (Bugaiov 68), Doros (Andronic 75), Frunza.
Finland: Fredrikson - Pasanen, Moisander, Hyypia, R Eremenko, Litmanen (Hamalainen 46), Sparv, Johansson, A Eremenko (Forssell 81), Heikkinen, Porokara (Vayrynen 75). *Sent off: Hyypia 36min.*

Sep 3 - Serravalle
San Marino 0
Holland 5 (Kuyt pen 16, Huntelaar 38, 48, 67, Van Nistelrooy 90+1)
HT: 0-2. **Att:** 4,127. **Ref:** Evans (Wal)
San Marino: A Simoncini - F Vitaioli, D Simoncini (Bacciocchi 61), Della Valle, Vannucci, C Valentini, Berretti, Manuel Marani (Gasperoni 76), Mazza, M Vitaioli (Ciacci 82), Selva.
Holland: Stekelenburg - Van der Wiel, Maduro, Mathijsen, Pieters, Kuyt (Van Nistelrooy 67), Van Bommel, Sneijder, De Jong (Van der Vaart 46), Elia (Afellay 59), Huntelaar.

Sep 3 - Stockholm
Sweden 2 (Wernbloom 51, 73)
Hungary 0
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 7,304. **Ref:** Atkinson (Eng)
Sweden: Isaksson (Wiland 46) - Lustig, Mellberg, Majstorovic, Safari, Elmander (S Larsson 49), A Svensson (Kallstrom 33), Toivonen, Wernbloom, Bajrami, Ibrahimovic.
Hungary: Kiraly - Lazar, Liptak, Juhasz, Laczko, Koman, Vadocz, Elek (Priskin 59), Dzsudzsak (Huszti 46), Gera, Rudolf (Hajnal 82).

Sep 7 - Rotterdam
Holland 2 (Huntelaar 7, pen 16)
Finland 1 (Forssell 18)
HT: 2-1. **Att:** 27,500. **Ref:** Nikolaev (Rus)
Holland: Stekelenburg - Van der Wiel, Heitinga, Mathijsen, Anita, Afellay (Lens 74), Van Bommel, Sneijder, De Jong, Van der Vaart (Elia 64), Huntelaar (Van Nistelrooy 82).
Finland: Fredrikson - Lampi, Heikkinen, Pasanen, Moisander, Hamalainen (Porokara 46), R Eremenko, Vayrynen, Sparv, Sjolund (Johansson 68), Forssell (A Eremenko 80).

Sep 7 - Budapest
Hungary 2 (Rudolf 50, Koman 66)
Moldova 1 (Suvorov 79)
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 9,209. **Ref:** Kovarik (Cze)
Hungary: Kiraly - Lazar, Liptak, Juhasz, Laczko, Elek, Czvitkovics (Szalai 46), Koman (Vadocz 88), Gera, Dzsudzsak, Rudolf (Vanczak 64).
Moldova: Stanislav Namasco - Bordian, Bulgaru, Bolohan, Racu, Epureanu, Tigirlas, Cebotaru (Cojocari 71), Josan (Doros 59), Suvorov, Frunza (Bugaiov 84).

Sep 7 - Malmo
Sweden 6 (Ibrahimovic 7, 77, D Simoncini og 11, A Simoncini og 26, Granqvist 51, Berg 90+2)
San Marino 0
HT: 3-0. **Att:** 21,082. **Ref:** McKeon (Rlr)
Sweden: Wiland - Lustig, Mellberg, Majstorovic, Safari, S Larsson, Wernbloom (Elmander 69), Toivonen (Granqvist 46), Kallstrom, Bajrami, Ibrahimovic (Berg 82). *Sent off: Mellberg 33min.*
San Marino: A Simoncini - F Vitaioli, Della Valle, D Simoncini, Vannucci, M Vitaioli, Mazza, Manuel Marani (Berretti 56), Bacciocchi (C Valentini 79), Chiaruzzi (Gasperoni 72), Selva.

EURO 2012 QUALIFIERS – GROUP E

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Sweden	2	2	0	0	8	0	6
Holland	2	2	0	0	7	1	6
Hungary	2	1	0	1	2	3	3
Moldova	2	1	0	1	3	2	3
Finland	2	0	0	2	1	4	0
San Marino	2	0	0	2	0	11	0

03.09.10 Moldova v Finland 2-0
03.09.10 San Marino v Holland 0-5
03.09.10 Sweden v Hungary 2-0
07.09.10 Holland v Finland 2-1
07.09.10 Hungary v Moldova 2-1
07.09.10 Sweden v San Marino 6-0
08.10.10 Hungary v San Marino
08.10.10 Moldova v Holland
12.10.10 Finland v Hungary
12.10.10 Holland v Sweden
12.10.10 San Marino v Moldova
17.11.10 Finland v San Marino
25.03.11 Hungary v Holland
29.03.11 Holland v Hungary
29.03.11 Sweden v Moldova
03.06.11 Moldova v Sweden
03.06.11 San Marino v Finland
07.06.11 San Marino v Hungary
07.06.11 Sweden v Finland
02.09.11 Finland v Moldova
02.09.11 Holland v San Marino
02.09.11 Hungary v Sweden
06.09.11 Finland v Holland
06.09.11 Moldova v Hungary
06.09.11 San Marino v Sweden
07.10.11 Finland v Sweden
07.10.11 Holland v Moldova
11.10.11 Hungary v Finland
11.10.11 Moldova v San Marino
11.10.11 Sweden v Holland

Group F

Sep 2 - Tel Aviv
Israel 3 (Benayoun 7, pen 64, 75)
Malta 1 (Pace 38)
HT: 1-1. **Att:** 17,000. **Ref:** Ennjimi (Fra)
Israel: Aouate - Ben Haim, Ben Dayan, Bondarv, Benayoun, T Cohen, Rafaelov, Kayal (Golasa 86), Zahavi (Vermouth 51), A Cohen, Sahar (Arbeitman 73).
Malta: Hogg - Herrera (Manny Muscat 80), Caruana, Mamo, Sciberras, A Agius, S Bajada, Briffa (Failla 82), Pace, M Mifsud, Bogdanovic (Cohen 57).

Sep 3 - Piraeus
Greece 1 (Spiropoulos 72)
Georgia 1 (A Iashvili 3)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 5,000. **Ref:** Clos Gomez (Spa)
Greece: Sifakis - Seitaridis (Mitroglou 71), A Papadopoulos, Papastathopoulos, Spiropoulos, Torosidis, Katsouranis, Karagounis, Salpigidis, Samaras (Ninis 59), Gekas.
Georgia: Revishvili - Lobzhanidze, Amisulashvili, Kaladze, Asatiani, Khizanishvili, Gogua (Merebashvili 87), Kvirkvelia, Dvalishvili (Gelashvili 60), A Iashvili (Ananidze 54), Kobiashvili.

Sep 3 - Riga
Latvia 0
Croatia 3 (Petric 43, Olic 51, Srna 82)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 7,000. **Ref:** Kuipers (Hol)
Latvia: Vanins - Klava, Gorkss, Ivanovs, Mihadjuks, Rafalskis, Laizans (Astafjevs 87), Rubins (Zigajevs 85), Cauna, Verpakovskis, Karlsons (Rudnevs 63).
Croatia: Runje - Srna, Corluka, Simunic, Strinic, Rakitic, Vukojevic (Pranjic 70), Petric (Mandzukic 84), Kranjcar, Olic, Eduardo (Jelavic 62).

worldmags

Up for it...Desailly

GHANA

Desailly states his desire for coach's job

Former France captain Marcel Desailly has expressed his interest in taking the vacant Ghana coaching job following Milovan Rajevac's exit.

The 42-year-old former Milan and Chelsea defender, who was born in Ghana, has twice before turned down approaches from the Ghana FA but he now feels the time is right. "I am ready if they need me," he says.

MEXICO

Defeat on home soil

Mexico suffered a rare home defeat when they lost 1-2 to Ecuador in a friendly.

Christian Benitez opened the scoring for the visitors in the first minute at Guadalajara's Omnilife stadium to immediately disrupt Mexico's plans for the night. An own goal from Luis Checa levelled things just before half-time until Jaime Ayovi restored Ecuador's lead.

Winner...Ayovi

SAN MARINO

Two of a kind

Twins Davide and Aldo Simoncini both got on the scoresheet in the Euro 2012 qualifier against Sweden in

Sep 7 - Zagreb
Croatia 0
Greece 0
Att: 33,000. **Ref:** Larsen (Den)
Croatia: Runje - Srna, Corluka, Simunic, Strinic, Pranjic, Vukojevic (Rakitic 57), Petric (Jelavic 46), Modric, Kranjcar, Olic (Eduardo 73).
Greece: Sifakis - Vyntra, A Papadopoulos, Papastathopoulos, Tzavelas, Torosidis (Seitaridis 90+2), Katsouranis, Karagounis (Ninis 70), Tziolis, Salpigidis (Gekas 59), Samaras.

Sep 7 - Tbilisi
Georgia 0
Israel 0
Att: 3,000. **Ref:** Kever (Swi)
Georgia: Revishvili - Lobzhanidze, Asatiani, Kaladze, Amisulashvili, Khizanishvili, Gogua (Aptsiauri 75), Ananidze, A Iashvili (Siradze 46), Kobiashvili, Dvalishvili (Merebashvili 63).
Israel: Aouate - Ben Haim, Bondarv, Kayal, A Cohen, Rafaelov (Vermouth 75), Keinan, Benayoun, Sahar (Arbeitman 53), Ben Dayan, T Cohen (Zahavi 61).

Sep 7 - Valletta
Malta 0
Latvia 2 (Gorkss 43, Verpakovskis 85)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 6,000. **Ref:** Asumaa (Fin)
Malta: Hogg - Manny Muscat (Bogdanovic 59), Caruana, Mamo (R Fenech 77), Sciberras (Failla 77), A Agius, S Bajada, Briffa, Pace, M Mifsud, Cohen.
Latvia: Vanins - Klava, Gorkss, Ivanovs, Mihadjuks, Rafalskis (Astafjevs 82), Laizans, Rubins, Cauna, Verpakovskis (Pereplotkins 90+2), Rudnevs (Karlsons 70).

EURO 2012 QUALIFIERS – GROUP F

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Croatia	2	1	1	0	3	0	4
Israel	2	1	1	0	3	1	4
Latvia	2	1	0	1	2	3	3
Georgia	2	0	2	0	1	1	2
Greece	2	0	2	0	1	1	2
Malta	2	0	0	2	1	5	0

02.09.10 Israel v Malta 3-1
03.09.10 Greece v Georgia..... 1-1
03.09.10 Latvia v Croatia 0-3
07.09.10 Croatia v Greece 0-0
07.09.10 Georgia v Israel..... 0-0
07.09.10 Malta v Latvia 0-2
08.10.10 Georgia v Malta
08.10.10 Greece v Latvia
09.10.10 Israel v Croatia
12.10.10 Greece v Israel
12.10.10 Latvia v Georgia
17.11.10 Croatia v Malta
26.03.11 Georgia v Croatia
26.03.11 Israel v Latvia
26.03.11 Malta v Greece
29.03.11 Israel v Georgia
04.06.11 Croatia v Georgia
04.06.11 Greece v Malta
04.06.11 Latvia v Israel
02.09.11 Georgia v Latvia
02.09.11 Israel v Greece
02.09.11 Malta v Croatia
06.09.11 Croatia v Israel
06.09.11 Latvia v Greece
06.09.11 Malta v Georgia
07.10.11 Greece v Croatia
07.10.11 Latvia v Malta
11.10.11 Croatia v Latvia
11.10.11 Georgia v Greece
11.10.11 Malta v Israel

Group G

Sep 3 - London
England 4 (Defoe 3, 61, 86, A Johnson 83)
Bulgaria 0
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 73,246. **Ref:** Kassai (Hun)
England: Hart - G Johnson, Dawson (Cahill 57), Jagielka, A Cole, Walcott (A Johnson 74), Gerrard, Barry, Milner, Defoe (Young 87), Rooney.
Bulgaria: Mihailov - Manolev (Minev 65), Ilian Stoyanov, I Ivanov, Milanov, Yankov, Angelov, S Petrov, M Petrov, Bozhinov (Rangelov 63), Popov (Peev 79).

Sep 3 - Podgorica
Montenegro 1 (Vucinic 30)
Wales 0
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 9,862. **Ref:** Kakos (Gre)
Montenegro: M Bozovic - Pavicevic, Basa, Jovanovic, Dzudovic, Pekovic, Boskovic (V Bozovic 74), Zverotic, S Vukcevic (Beciraj 87), Vucinic, Djalovic (Novakovic 83).
Wales: Hennessey - Ricketts, J Collins (Morgan 75), Williams, Gunter, Bellamy, Vaughan, Edwards (Earnshaw 68), Ledley, Bale, Morison (Church 78).

Sep 7 - Sofia
Bulgaria 0
Montenegro 1 (Zverotic 36)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 5,000. **Ref:** Bezborodov (Rus)
Bulgaria: Mihailov - Milanov (Genchev 46), Ilian Stoyanov, I Ivanov, Minev, Peev (Domovchiyski 66), Angelov, S Petrov, M Petrov, Popov, Rangelov (Bozhinov 46).
Montenegro: M Bozovic - Pavicevic, Basa, Dzudovic, Jovanovic, S Vukcevic, Boskovic (V Bozovic 64), Zverotic (Novakovic 68), Pekovic, Vucinic, Djalovic (Kascelan 77).

Sep 7 - Basle
Switzerland 1 (Shaqiri 71)
England 3 (Rooney 10, A Johnson 69, Bent 88)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 37,500. **Ref:** Rizzoli (Ita)
Switzerland: Benaglio - Lichtsteiner, Von Bergen, Grichting, Ziegler, Margairaz (Shaqiri 46), Inler, Schwegler (Costanzo 83), D Degen (Streller 64), Frei, Derdiyok. *Sent off: Lichtsteiner 65min.*
England: Hart - G Johnson, Jagielka, Lescott, A Cole, Walcott (A Johnson 13), Gerrard, Barry, Milner, Rooney (Wright-Phillips 79), Defoe (Bent 70).

EURO 2012 QUALIFIERS – GROUP G

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
England	2	2	0	0	7	1	6
Montenegro	2	2	0	0	2	0	6
Wales	1	0	0	1	0	1	0
Switzerland	1	0	0	1	1	3	0
Bulgaria	2	0	0	2	0	5	0

03.09.10 England v Bulgaria..... 4-0
03.09.10 Montenegro v Wales 1-0
07.09.10 Bulgaria v Montenegro 0-1
07.09.10 Switzerland v England 1-3
08.10.10 Montenegro v Switzerland
08.10.10 Wales v Bulgaria
12.10.10 England v Montenegro
12.10.10 Switzerland v Wales
26.03.11 Bulgaria v Switzerland
26.03.11 Wales v England
04.06.11 England v Switzerland
04.06.11 Montenegro v Bulgaria
02.09.11 Bulgaria v England
02.09.11 Wales v Montenegro
06.09.11 England v Wales
06.09.11 Switzerland v Bulgaria
07.10.11 Montenegro v England
07.10.11 Wales v Switzerland
11.10.11 Bulgaria v Wales
11.10.11 Switzerland v Montenegro

Group H

Sep 3 - Reykjavik
Iceland 1 (Helguson 38)
Norway 2 (Hangeland 58, Abdellaoue 75)
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 6,137. **Ref:** Banti (Ita)
Iceland: Gunnleifsson - Steinsson (Bjarnason 76), Ottesen, I Sigurdsson, K O Sigurdsson, G Sigurdsson, J Gudmundsson (R Gislason 87), A E Gunnarsson, E G Jonsson, V Gunnarsson (Adalsteinsson 76), Helguson.
Norway: Knudsen - Hogli, Waehler, Hangeland, J A Riise, Huseklepp (Ruud 76), B H Riise (Iversen 57), Grindheim, Hauger, Gamst Pedersen, Abdellaoue (Solli 88).

Sep 3 - Guimaraes
Portugal 4 (Hugo Almeida 8, Raul Meireles 29, Danny 50, Manuel Fernandes 60)
Cyprus 4 (Aloneftis 3, Konstantinou 11, Okkas 57, Avraam 89)
HT: 2-2. **Att:** 9,100. **Ref:** Clattenburg (Eng)
Portugal: Eduardo - Miguel, Bruno Alves, Ricardo Carvalho, Fabio Coentrao, Danny (Liedson 61), Manuel Fernandes (Joao Moutinho 79), Raul Meireles, Nani, Quaresma, Hugo Almeida (Djalo 84).
Cyprus: Georgallides - Elia (Poursaitidis 66), Dobrasinovic, Merkis, Avraam, Makrides, Satsias, Charalambous, Charalambides (Nikolaou 76), Konstantinou, Aloneftis (Okkas 56).

Sep 7 - Copenhagen
Denmark 1 (Kahlenberg 90+1)
Iceland 0
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 19,908. **Ref:** McDonald (Sco)
Denmark: Lindegaard - Jacobsen, Kjaer, Agger, Jessen, Krohn-Dehli (Vingaard 76), Christian Poulsen, Kahlenberg, Rommedahl, Pedersen (Skoubo 71), Eriksen (Junker 56).
Iceland: Gunnleifsson - B Saevarsson, I Sigurdsson, Ottesen, K O Sigurdsson, A E Gunnarsson, E G Jonsson, R Gislason, G Sigurdsson, J Gudmundsson (Bjarnason 90+2), Helguson (Sigthorsson 77).

Sep 7 - Oslo
Norway 1 (Huseklepp 21)
Portugal 0
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 24,535. **Ref:** Duhamel (Fra)
Norway: Knudsen - Hogli, Waehler (Demidov 28), Hangeland, Ruud, B H Riise, Hauger, Grindheim (Jenssen 86), Huseklepp, Gamst Pedersen, Carew (Abdellaoue 38).
Portugal: Eduardo - Silvio, Bruno Alves, Ricardo Carvalho, Miguel Veloso, Raul Meireles, Manuel Fernandes, Tiago (Danny 72), Quaresma (Liedson 84), Hugo Almeida, Nani.

EURO 2012 QUALIFIERS – GROUP H

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Norway	2	2	0	0	3	1	6
Denmark	1	1	0	0	1	0	3
Cyprus	1	0	1	0	4	4	1
Portugal	2	0	1	1	4	5	1
Iceland	2	0	0	2	1	3	0

03.09.10 Iceland v Norway 1-2
03.09.10 Portugal v Cyprus..... 4-4
07.09.10 Denmark v Iceland..... 1-0
07.09.10 Norway v Portugal 1-0
08.10.10 Cyprus v Norway
08.10.10 Portugal v Denmark
12.10.10 Denmark v Cyprus
12.10.10 Iceland v Portugal
26.03.11 Cyprus v Iceland
26.03.11 Norway v Denmark
04.06.11 Iceland v Denmark
04.06.11 Portugal v Norway
02.09.11 Cyprus v Portugal
02.09.11 Norway v Iceland
06.09.11 Denmark v Norway
06.09.11 Iceland v Cyprus
07.10.11 Cyprus v Denmark
07.10.11 Portugal v Iceland
11.10.11 Denmark v Portugal
11.10.11 Norway v Cyprus

Group I

Sep 3 - Vaduz
Liechtenstein 0
Spain 4 (Fernando Torres 18, 54, Villa 26, Silva 62)
HT: 0-2. **Att:** 6,127. **Ref:** Yildirim (Tur)
Liechtenstein: Jehle - Martin Stocklasa, Oehri (Vogt 46), Michael Stocklasa, Eberle (Rechsteiner 45), Wieser (R Buchel 82), Polverino, Erne, M Frick, Burgmeier, D Hasler.
Spain: Casillas - Sergio Ramos, Pique, Marchena, Capdevila, Xavi (Fabregas 46), Busquets, Xabi Alonso, Iniesta (Pedro 65), Fernando Torres (Silva 57), Villa.

Sep 3 - Kaunas
Lithuania 0
Scotland 0
Att: 6,539. **Ref:** Cakir (Tur)
Lithuania: Karcemarskas - Stankevicius, Skerla, Radavicius, Kijanskas, Semberas, Panka, E Cesnauskis, Mikoliunas (Poskus 71), Danilevicius (Ivaskevicius 90), Sernas (Luksa 80).
Scotland: McGregor - Hutton, Weir, McManus, Whittaker (Berra 90), D Fletcher, McCulloch, Brown (Morrison 76), Robson (McFadden 69), K Miller, Naismith.

Sep 7 - Olomouc
Czech Republic 0
Lithuania 1 (Sernas 26)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 12,100. **Ref:** Yefet (Isr)
Czech Republic: Cech - Kadlec, Hubnik, Polak (Stajner 69), Fenin (Necid 59), Rosicky, Pudil (Bednar 84), Pospech, Plasil, Baros, Hubschman.
Lithuania: Karcemarskas - Stankevicius, Skerla, Radavicius, Kijanskas, Semberas, Panka, E Cesnauskis, Mikoliunas (Luksa 79), Danilevicius (Ivaskevicius 90), Sernas (Poskus 61).

Sep 7 - Glasgow
Scotland 2 (K Miller 63, McManus 90+7)
Liechtenstein 1 (M Frick 47)
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 37,050. **Ref:** Shvetsov (Ukr)
Scotland: McGregor - Hutton, L Wallace (Robson 54), McManus, Weir, McCulloch, D Fletcher, Brown, K Miller, Boyd (Naismith 66), McFadden (Morrison 46).
Liechtenstein: Jehle - Rechsteiner, Michael Stocklasa, Oehri, Martin Stocklasa, Polverino, Burgmeier, Erne, Wieser (R Buchel 71), D Hasler (N Hasler 90+2), M Frick (D'Elia 79).

EURO 2012 QUALIFIERS – GROUP I

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Scotland	2	1	1	0	2	1	4
Lithuania	2	1	1	0	1	0	4
Spain	1	1	0	0	4	0	3
Czech Rep	1	0	0	1	0	1	0
Liechtenstein	2	0	0	2	1	6	0

03.09.10 Liechtenstein v Spain..... 0-4
03.09.10 Lithuania v Scotland 0-0
07.09.10 Czech Republic v Lithuania..... 0-1
07.09.10 Scotland v Liechtenstein..... 2-1
08.10.10 Czech Republic v Scotland
08.10.10 Spain v Lithuania
12.10.10 Liechtenstein v Czech Rep

Happy return...Ibrahimovic

Malmo but, unfortunately, they both managed to find the net at the wrong end with own goals as the hosts won 6-0.

Milan striker Zlatan Ibrahimovic marked his first match in his hometown for nine years with two goals.

SCOTLAND

Ferguson to return?

Manager Craig Levein has confirmed that he is still keen to have Barry Ferguson back in the Scotland squad following the Birmingham City midfielder's indication that he is ready to return to international football.

The 32-year-old has not played for his country since the "Boozegate" scandal last year, when he and Rangers goalkeeper Allan McGregor were banned for a drinking session after Scotland's 3–0 defeat by Holland in a World Cup qualifier.

Ready for a recall...Ferguson

SENEGAL

Niang grabs three

Turkey-based striker Mamadou Niang, who plays for Fenerbahce, helped himself to the first hat-trick of the African Nations Cup qualifiers as Senegal surprised defensively brittle Democratic Republic of Congo 4-2 in Lubumbashi. Patou Kabangu was on target twice for the beaten hosts.

12.10.10	Scotland v Spain
25.03.11	Spain v Czech Republic
29.03.11	Czech Rep v Liechtenstein
29.03.11	Lithuania v Spain
03.06.11	Liechtenstein v Lithuania
02.09.11	Lithuania v Liechtenstein
03.09.11	Scotland v Czech Republic
06.09.11	Scotland v Lithuania
06.09.11	Spain v Liechtenstein
07.10.11	Czech Republic v Spain
08.10.11	Liechtenstein v Scotland
11.10.11	Lithuania v Czech Republic
11.10.11	Spain v Scotland

The nine group winners and the runner-up with the best record (against the teams finishing 1st, 3rd, 4th and 5th in the respective groups) qualify automatically for the finals. The eight remaining runners-up will be drawn in four head-to-head, two-leg play-offs, the winners of which will also qualify for the finals. Co-hosts Poland and Ukraine qualify automatically

Play-off dates:
1st legs - November 11/12, 2011;
2nd legs - November 15, 2011

2012 AFRICAN NATIONS CUP QUALS

Group A

Sep 4 - Praia
Cape Verde Islands 1 (Varela 44)
Mali 0
HT: 1-0

Sep 5 - Paynesville
Liberia 1 (Oliseh 69)
Zimbabwe 1 (Musona 30)
HT: 0-1

2012 AFRICAN NATIONS CUP QUALS – GROUP A

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Cape Verde	1	1	0	0	1	0	3
Liberia	1	0	1	0	1	1	1
Zimbabwe	1	0	1	0	1	1	1
Mali	1	0	0	1	0	1	0

04.09.10	Cape Verde v Mali 1-0
05.09.10	Liberia v Zimbabwe 1-1
09.10.10	Mali v Liberia
09.10.10	Zimbabwe v Cape Verde
26.03.11	Cape Verde v Liberia
26.03.11	Mali v Zimbabwe
04.06.11	Liberia v Cape Verde
04.06.11	Zimbabwe v Mali
03.09.11	Mali v Cape Verde
03.09.11	Zimbabwe v Liberia
08.10.11	Cape Verde v Zimbabwe
08.10.11	Liberia v Mali

Group B

Sep 5 - Addis Abeba
Ethiopia 1 (Girma 29)
Guinea 4 (I Yattara 37, 45, K Cisse 60, Zayatte 75)
HT: 1-2

Sep 5 - Calabar
Nigeria 2 (Martins 19, Eneramo 45+1)
Madagascar 0
HT: 2-0
Nigeria: Enyeama - Odiah, Nwabili, Yobo, Shittu, Ajilore (Otekpa 54), Mikel, Odemwingie, K Uche, Eneramo (Okoro 68), Martins.

2012 AFRICAN NATIONS CUP QUALS – GROUP B

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Guinea	1	1	0	0	4	1	3
Nigeria	1	1	0	0	2	0	3
Madagascar	1	0	0	1	0	2	0
Ethiopia	1	0	0	1	1	4	0

05.09.10	Ethiopia v Guinea 1-4
05.09.10	Nigeria v Madagascar 2-0
09.10.10	Guinea v Nigeria
09.10.10	Madagascar v Ethiopia
26.03.11	Madagascar v Guinea
26.03.11	Nigeria v Ethiopia
04.06.11	Ethiopia v Nigeria
04.06.11	Guinea v Madagascar
03.09.11	Guinea v Ethiopia
03.09.11	Madagascar v Nigeria
08.10.11	Ethiopia v Madagascar
08.10.11	Nigeria v Guinea

Group C

Sep 5 - Maputo
Mozambique 0
Libya 0

Sep 5 - Lusaka
Zambia 4 (Kalaba 6, Tembo 22, Chamanga 29, Mayuka 83)
Comoros 0
HT: 3-0

2012 AFRICAN NATIONS CUP QUALS – GROUP C

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Zambia	1	1	0	0	4	0	3
Libya	1	0	1	0	0	0	1
Mozambique	1	0	1	0	0	0	1
Comoros	1	0	0	1	0	4	0

05.09.10	Mozambique v Libya 0-0
05.09.10	Zambia v Comoros 4-0
09.10.10	Comoros v Mozambique
09.10.10	Libya v Zambia
26.03.11	Libya v Comoros
26.03.11	Mozambique v Zambia
04.06.11	Comoros v Libya
04.06.11	Zambia v Mozambique
03.09.11	Comoros v Zambia
03.09.11	Libya v Mozambique
08.10.11	Mozambique v Comoros
08.10.11	Zambia v Libya

Group D

Sep 3 - Blida
Algeria 1 (Guedioura 45)
Tanzania 1 (Tegete 33)
HT: 1-1
Algeria: M'Bolhi - Ghezzal, Bougherra, Halliche (Medjani 51), Belhadj, Boudebouz (Abdoun 69), Guedioura, Yebda, Ziani, Ziaya (Amri 71), Djebbour.

Sep 4 - Rabat
Morocco 0
Central African Republic 0

2012 AFRICAN NATIONS CUP QUALS – GROUP D

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Algeria	1	0	1	0	1	1	1
Tanzania	1	0	1	0	1	1	1
Cent Af Rep	1	0	1	0	0	0	1
Morocco	1	0	1	0	0	0	1

03.09.10	Algeria v Tanzania 1-1
04.09.10	Morocco v Cent Af Rep 0-0
09.10.10	Cent Af Rep v Algeria
09.10.10	Tanzania v Morocco
26.03.11	Algeria v Morocco
26.03.11	Tanzania v Cent Af Rep
04.06.11	Cent Af Rep v Tanzania
04.06.11	Morocco v Algeria
03.09.11	Cent Af Rep v Morocco
03.09.11	Tanzania v Algeria
08.10.11	Algeria v Cent Af Rep
08.10.11	Morocco v Tanzania

Group E

Sep 4 - Curepipe
Mauritius 1 (Bru 45)
Cameroon 3 (Eto'o 36, 48, Choupo-Moting 60)
HT: 1-1
Cameroon: N'Dy Assembe - N'Koulou, Bassong, Assou-Ekotto, Binya, Chedjou, Makoun, Bedimo (Enoh 72), Ndjeng (Aboubakar 62), Choupo-Moting (Ntsama 80), Eto'o.

Sep 5 - Lubumbashi
DR Congo 2 (Kabangu 45+3, 68)
Senegal 4 (Sow 6, Niang 10, 21, 48)
HT: 1-3

2012 AFRICAN NATIONS CUP QUALS – GROUP E

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Senegal	1	1	0	0	4	2	3
Cameroon	1	1	0	0	3	1	3
DR Congo	1	0	0	1	2	4	0
Mauritius	1	0	0	1	1	3	0

04.09.10	Mauritius v Cameroon 1-3
05.09.10	DR Congo v Senegal 2-4
09.10.10	Cameroon v DR Congo
09.10.10	Senegal v Mauritius
26.03.11	DR Congo v Mauritius
26.03.11	Senegal v Cameroon
04.06.11	Cameroon v Senegal
04.06.11	Mauritius v DR Congo
03.09.11	Cameroon v Mauritius
03.09.11	Senegal v DR Congo
08.10.11	DR Congo v Cameroon
08.10.11	Mauritius v Senegal

Group F

Sep 4 - Banjul
Gambia 3 (Nyassi 10, Ceesay 13, Jallow 32)
Namibia 1 (W Risser 89)
HT: 3-0

2012 AFRICAN NATIONS CUP QUALS – GROUP F

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Gambia	1	1	0	0	3	1	3
Burkina Faso	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Namibia	1	0	0	1	1	3	0

Mauritania withdrew before 1st round of games

04.09.10	Gambia v Namibia 3-1
09.10.10	Burkina Faso v Gambia
26.03.11	Burkina Faso v Namibia
04.06.11	Namibia v Burkina Faso
03.09.11	Namibia v Gambia
08.10.11	Gambia v Burkina Faso

Group G

Sep 4 - Nelspruit
South Africa 2 (Mphela 13, Parker 45+3)
Niger 0
HT: 2-0
South Africa: Khune - Ngcongca, Masilela, Khumalo, Mokoena, Sibaya, Khuboni (Letsholonyane 66), Pienaar (Modise 80), Tshabalala, Mphela (Erasmus 77), Parker.

Sep 5 - Cairo
Egypt 1 (Fathalla 61)
Sierra Leone 1 (Bangura 57)
HT: 0-0
Egypt: El Hadary - Al Muhammadi, Gomaa, Fathalla, Moawad, Fathi, Hassan (El Solayya), Aboutraika, Gedo, Mekki (Soliman), Ali (Zaher).

2012 AFRICAN NATIONS CUP QUALS – GROUP G

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
South Africa	1	1	0	0	2	0	3
Egypt	1	0	1	0	1	1	1
Sierra Leone	1	0	1	0	1	1	1
Niger	1	0	0	1	0	2	0

04.09.10	South Africa v Niger 2-0
05.09.10	Egypt v Sierra Leone 1-1
09.10.10	Niger v Egypt
09.10.10	Sierra Leone v South Africa
26.03.11	Niger v Sierra Leone
26.03.11	South Africa v Egypt
04.06.11	Egypt v South Africa
04.06.11	Sierra Leone v Niger
03.09.11	Niger v South Africa
03.09.11	Sierra Leone v Egypt
08.10.11	Egypt v Niger
08.10.11	South Africa v Sierra Leone

Group H

Sep 4 - Abidjan
Ivory Coast 3 (Y Toure 11, Kalou 19, Eboue 40)
Rwanda 0
HT: 3-0
Ivory Coast: Yeboah - Demel (Romaric), K Toure, Zokora, Tiene (Guie), Y Toure, Tiote (Fae), Boka, Eboue, Kalou, Gervinho.

Sep 5 - Cotonou
Benin 1 (Pote 2)
Burundi 1 (Saleh 85)
HT: 1-0

2012 AFRICAN NATIONS CUP QUALS – GROUP H

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Ivory Coast	1	1	0	0	3	0	3
Benin	1	0	1	0	1	1	1
Burundi	1	0	1	0	1	1	1
Rwanda	1	0	0	1	0	3	0

04.09.10	Ivory Coast v Rwanda 3-0
05.09.10	Benin v Burundi 1-1
09.10.10	Burundi v Ivory Coast
09.10.10	Rwanda v Benin
26.03.11	Ivory Coast v Benin
26.03.11	Rwanda v Burundi
04.06.11	Benin v Ivory Coast
04.06.11	Burundi v Rwanda
03.09.11	Burundi v Benin
03.09.11	Rwanda v Ivory Coast
08.10.11	Benin v Rwanda
08.10.11	Ivory Coast v Burundi

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SOUTH AFRICA

Two out of two

Pitso Mosimane, who succeeded Carlos Alberto Parreira as the national coach after the World Cup finals, made it two wins in two games as he celebrated his first competitive victory in charge of *Bafana Bafana* when his side beat Niger 2-0 in their opening 2012 African Nations Cup qualifier.

Joint top...Villa

SPAIN

Villa level with Raul

Barcelona's David Villa equalled Raul's all-time goalscoring record for the national team when he scored in the world champions' 4-0 win over Liechtenstein in their opening European Championship qualifier.

The goal was Villa's 44th for his country in his 66th appearance, whereas Raul needed 102 matches to reach the same mark.

Carlos Marchena's proud record of never having been on the losing side in an international match came to an end as Spain were beaten 4-1 in a friendly by Argentina. It was the 31-year-old defender's first defeat for his country in 57 matches, a run which stretched all the way back to his debut in June 2003.

TOGO

Who played in Bahrain?

A "fake" Togo national team played an international friendly in Bahrain, prompting an investigation from the African nation's sports ministry and FIFA.

Bahrain won the game 3-0, but Togo officials claim to have no knowledge of the match and it has since emerged that the players

Group I

Sep 4 - Omdurman
Sudan 2 (El Tahir 9, Tahir pen 90)
Congo 0
HT: 1-0

Sep 5 - Lobamba
Swaziland 0
Ghana 3 (A Ayew 13, Tagoe 73, Sarpei 81)
HT: 0-1
Ghana: Kingson - Paintsil, Sarpei, L Addy, Vorsah, Annan, Tagoe, Boateng (Agyemang-Badu), Gyan (Inkoom), Asamoah, A Ayew (J Ayew).

2012 AFRICAN NATIONS CUP QUALS – GROUP I

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Ghana	1	1	0	0	3	0	3
Sudan	1	1	0	0	2	0	3
Congo	1	0	0	1	0	2	0
Swaziland	1	0	0	1	0	3	0

04.09.10 Sudan v Congo 2-0
05.09.10 Swaziland v Ghana 0-3
09.10.10 Congo v Swaziland
09.10.10 Ghana v Sudan
26.03.11 Congo v Ghana
26.03.11 Sudan v Swaziland
04.06.11 Ghana v Congo
04.06.11 Swaziland v Sudan
03.09.11 Congo v Sudan
03.09.11 Ghana v Swaziland
08.10.11 Sudan v Ghana
08.10.11 Swaziland v Congo

Group J

Sep 4 - Bissau
Guinea-Bissau 1 (Semedo 76)
Kenya 0
HT: 0-0

Sep 4 - Kampala
Uganda 3 (Obua 35, Mwesigwa 58, Sserunkuma 88)
Angola 0
HT: 1-0

2012 AFRICAN NATIONS CUP QUALS – GROUP J

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Uganda	1	1	0	0	3	0	3
Guinea-Bissau	1	1	0	0	1	0	3
Kenya	1	0	0	1	0	1	0
Angola	1	0	0	1	0	3	0

04.09.10 Guinea-Bissau v Kenya 1-0
04.09.10 Uganda v Angola 3-0
09.10.10 Angola v Guinea-Bissau
09.10.10 Kenya v Uganda
26.03.11 Guinea-Bissau v Uganda
26.03.11 Kenya v Angola
04.06.11 Angola v Kenya
04.06.11 Uganda v Guinea-Bissau
03.09.11 Angola v Uganda
03.09.11 Kenya v Guinea-Bissau
08.10.11 Guinea-Bissau v Angola
08.10.11 Uganda v Kenya

Group K

Sep 4 - Gaborone
Botswana 2 (Mogorosi 8, Ramatlhkwane 56)
Togo 1 (F Ayite 49)
HT: 1-0

Sep 4 - Rades
Tunisia 2 (Jemaa 11, 26)
Malawi 2 (C Msowoya 45, Kanyenda 82)
HT: 2-1

2012 AFRICAN NATIONS CUP QUALS – GROUP K

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Botswana	4	3	1	0	5	2	10
Tunisia	3	1	1	1	5	4	4
Malawi	3	0	3	0	4	4	3
Togo	3	0	2	1	4	5	2
Chad	3	0	1	2	3	6	1

01.07.10 Chad v Togo 2-2
01.07.10 Tunisia v Botswana 0-1
09.07.10 Botswana v Chad 1-0
09.07.10 Togo v Malawi 1-1
11.08.10 Chad v Tunisia 1-3
11.08.10 Malawi v Botswana 1-1
04.09.10 Botswana v Togo 2-1
04.09.10 Tunisia v Malawi 2-2
09.10.10 Malawi v Chad
09.10.10 Togo v Tunisia
17.11.10 Botswana v Tunisia
17.11.10 Togo v Chad
26.03.11 Chad v Botswana
26.03.11 Malawi v Togo
04.06.11 Botswana v Malawi
04.06.11 Tunisia v Chad
03.09.11 Malawi v Tunisia
03.09.11 Togo v Botswana
08.10.11 Chad v Malawi
08.10.11 Tunisia v Togo

The 11 group winners and the three runners-up with the best record will qualify for the finals, to which co-hosts Equatorial Guinea and Gabon qualify automatically

FRIENDLIES

Friday, August 20

Aug 20 - Mahajanga
Madagascar 0
Mayotte 0

Saturday, August 28

Aug 28 - Basseterre
St Kitts & Nevis 1 (J Francis)
Antigua & Barbuda 1 (Burton)

Sunday, August 29

Aug 29 - Addis Abeba
Ethiopia 1
Chad 0

Aug 29 - Mahajanga
Madagascar 1
Comoros 0
HT: 1-0

Friday, September 3

Sep 3 - Zhengzhou
China 0
Iran 2 (Teymourian 38, Gholami 59)
HT: 0-1
China: Yang Zhi - He Yang (Liu Jianye 69), Du Wei, Feng Xiaoting (Zhao Peng 46), Rong Hao, Zhao Xuri, Yang Hao (Yu Tao 85), Yan Xiangchuang (Qu Bo 53), Deng Zhuoxiang (Chen Tao), Yu Hai, Yang Xu (Feng Renliang 72).
Iran: M Rahmati - P Nouri (Shojaei 55), Nosrati, J Hosseini, Aghili, Teymourian, K Heydari (Zenidpour 87), Nekounam, Gholami (Ansarifard 69), Khalatbary (Hajsafy 76), G Rezaei (Ouladi 83).

Sep 3 - Kuwait City
Kuwait 3 (Khalaf 8, Al Mutawa 84, Al Sulaiman 90)
Syria 0
HT: 1-0

Sep 3 - Doha, Qatar
Oman 3 (Rabia 3, Al Hosni 37, 44)
Malaysia 0
HT: 3-0

Sep 3 - Panama City
Panama 2 (Tejada 27, 38)
Costa Rica 2 (Barrantes 7, Saborio 52)
HT: 2-1. **Att:** 25,000. **Ref:** Delgadillo (Mex)
Panama: Penedo - Machado, Moreno, Torres, G Gomez (Godoy 73), Cooper (M Gomez 86), L Henriquez, Barahona, Quintero (A Henriquez 56), Tejada, B Perez (Renteria 84).
Costa Rica: Calderon - Mora, Miller, Diaz, Alfaro, Rodriguez (Sanchez 46), Borges (Cubero 57), Barrantes (De Guzman 71), Ruiz (Monge 83), Saborio, J Martinez (Russell 46).

Sep 3 - Doha
Qatar 1 (Siddiq 41)
Bahrain 1 (Aaish 21)
HT: 1-1

Sep 3 - St Gallen
Switzerland 0
Australia 0
Att: 14,660. **Ref:** Einwaller (Aut)
Switzerland: Wolfli - Lichtsteiner (Sutter 46), Affolter, Grichting (Von Bergen 46), Fernandes, D Degen (Ziegler 70), Inler (Schwegler 46), Margairaz, Bunjaku, Frei (Costanzo 67), Derdiyok (Shaqiri 46).
Australia: Schwarzer - Wilkshire, Neill, Spiranovic, Carney, Emerton, Culina, Valeri (Jedinak 82), Holman (Oar 84), McDonald, Cahill (Vidosic 67).

Sep 3 - Puerto La Cruz
Venezuela 0
Colombia 2 (Cuadrado 16, D Moreno 66)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 30,000. **Ref:** Moreno (Pan)
Venezuela: Vega - Rosales, Lucena, Vizcarrondo, Granados (Fuenmayor 79), Chourio (Di Giorgi 84), Rincon, Arango, Vargas (C Gonzalez 59), S Rondon (Renteria 67), Guerra (Seijas 59).
Colombia: Ospina - Zuniga, I Cordoba, Yepes, Armero, Cuadrado (Anchico 60), Viafara, J Restrepo, Rodallega (Robayo 78), G Moreno (D Moreno 52), Falcao Garcia (A Ramos 78; Valencia 90).

Saturday, September 4

Sep 4 - Toronto
Canada 0
Peru 2 (J C Fernandez 67, Tragodara 71)
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 10,619. **Ref:** Jurisevic (USA)
Canada: Hirschfeld - Stalteri, Straith, McKenna, De Jong (Peters 30), De Guzman, Hutchinson, Jackson (Hume 63), Johnson (Simpson 63), De Rosario, Friend (Nakajima-Farran 83).
Peru: R Fernandez - Guizasola, Acasiete, Zambrano, Vilchez (Rabanal 83), Ballon (Torres 88), Ramirez (Gonzales 85), Farfan, Vargas (Manco 64), Advincula (Tragodara 46; Galliquio 74), J C Fernandez.

Sep 4 - Los Angeles, USA (Copa Independencia)
El Salvador 2 (Zelaya 42, 90)
Honduras 2 (B Garcia 58, Rojas 86)
HT: 1-0
Honduras 4-3 on pens
El Salvador: Portillo - Marvin Gonzalez (Turcios 82), Salazar, Henriquez, Umanzor, Flores (Martin 66), Sanchez, Moscoco (Castillo 80), Quintanilla (Corrales 88), Romero (Alas 76), Zelaya.
Honduras: N Valladares - Mendoza, Norales, Jhony Palacios, Figueroa, B Garcia, Claros, Reina (Delgado 89), M Martinez (J C Garcia 83), Licona (C Martinez 61), Bengtson (Rojas 82).

Sep 4 - Fort Lauderdale, USA
Guatemala 5 (Montepeque 29, 57, Castellanos 35, Thompson 41, Flores 53)
Nicaragua 0
HT: 3-0. **Ref:** Bonds (USA)
Guatemala: Barrios - Noriega, Flores, Medina (Ceballos 54), Vides, Thompson, Guevara, Hidalgo (Estrada 85), Pappa (Romero 66), Montepeque (Lalin 73), Castellanos (Ciani 62).
Nicaragua: Espinoza - Alonso, Solorzano, Aviles (Baquedano 58), Tellez, Martin (Mejia 65), Solon, Reyes (Rodriguez 46), Vanegas, Calero, Sanchez (Barrera 46).

Sep 4 - Yokohama
Japan 1 (Kagawa 64)
Paraguay 0
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 65,157. **Ref:** Rodriguez (Mex)
Japan: Kawashima - Nakazawa, Kurihara (Iwamasa 68), Nagatomo, Uchida (Makino 89), K Nakamura, Matsui (Fujimoto 65), Hosogai, Honda (Hashimoto 78), Kagawa (Komano 90), Morimoto (Okazaki 60).
Paraguay: Villar - Da Silva, Alcaraz, M Caceres (Roman 60), Vera (C Ortiz 81), Santana (Perez 72), Torres, N Ortigoza, Santa Cruz (J Ortigoza 81), Barrios (Estigarribia 86), Camacho (Aquino 60).

Sep 4 - Guadalajara
Mexico 1 (Checa og 41)
Ecuador 2 (Benitez 1, J Ayovi 58)
HT: 1-1. **Ref:** Quesada (CR)
Mexico: G Ochoa - F Rodriguez, Moreno, Salcido, Marquez, Guardado, Torrado (E Hernandez 75), Barrera (Juarez 75), G Dos Santos, J Hernandez (Esqueda 77), Vela (Orozco 64).
Ecuador: Banguera - Checa, Paredes, Caicedo, Noboa (Minda 90+3), Arroyo (Nazareno 80), Quiroz, W Ayovi, Valencia, J Ayovi (Rojas 72), Benitez (De Jesus 72).

Sep 4 - Lodz
Poland 1 (Jelen 41)
Ukraine 1 (Selezniov 90+1)
HT: 1-0. **Ref:** Irmatov (Uzb)
Poland: Boruc - Piszczek, Zewlakow, Wojtkowiak, Boenisch, Bandrowski (Matuszczyk 46), Murawski, Iwanski (Lewandowski 60), Blaszczykowski (Rybus 84), Peszko, Jelen (Smolarek 87).
Ukraine: Pyatov - Romanchuk (Kozhanov 86), Fedetskyi, Tymoshchuk, Khacheridi, Aliyev (Polivoy 54), Husiev (Kulakov 46), Mykhalyk, Krasnopiorov (Khudobiak 64), Devic (Voronin 46), Shevchenko (Selezniov 58).

Sep 4 - Bangkok
Thailand 1 (Sarayoot 72)
India 0
HT: 0-0

may not have been professional footballers or even Togolese nationals.

Sheik Ali bin Khalifa Al Khalifa, vice-president of the Bahrain football federation, has insisted that the match was legitimate and that the confusion has been created by a conflict between the Togo sports ministry and the interim Togo football federation.

Meanwhile, the chairman of Togo's interim federation, Seiyi Memene, denies his association had anything to do with the team in Bahrain.

"We cannot send our players to play friendly matches abroad without the approval of FIFA," he said. "The players that took part in the friendly match against Bahrain were completely fake. We have not sent any team of footballers to Bahrain. The players are not known to us."

Playing games...Bahrain's Jaycee John (right) takes on "Togo"

VIETNAM

ASEAN Cup draw

Holders Vietnam will face Singapore and Myanmar in this year's ASEAN Cup, while Indonesia were drawn with Thailand and Malaysia. The tournament will be held in December, with a qualifying event in October where Cambodia, Laos, Timor-Leste and the Philippines will battle for the final two berths.

Sunday, September 5

Sep 5 - Kingston
Jamaica 1 (R Johnson 66)
Costa Rica 0
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 8,500. **Ref:** Brizan (T&T)
Jamaica: Miller - Dicoy Williams, J Taylor, A Reid, Edwards (Palmer 81), Morrison (Forbes 90), Vernan, Phillips (Smith 74), Richards (K Daley 69), R Johnson (Watson 86), Bryan (O Daley 60).
Costa Rica: Pemberton - Mena, Diaz, Blanco (Fernandez 71), Miller, Borges (Guzman 74), Sanchez (Monge 64), Alonso, Russell (J Martinez 59), Barrantes (Cubero 64), Ruiz.

Monday, September 6

Sep 6 - Cannes, France
Gabon 1 (Issakounia 52)
Burkina Faso 1 (Alain Traore pen 87)
HT: 0-0
Sent off: Koffi, P Coulibaly (both Burkina Faso); P-E Aubameyang (Gabon)

Tuesday, September 7

Sep 7 - Buenos Aires
Argentina 4 (Messi 10, Higuain 13, Tevez 34, Aguero 90+1)
Spain 1 (Llorente 84)
HT: 3-0. **Att:** 57,900. **Ref:** Ruiz (Col)
Argentina: Romero - Zanetti, Demichelis, G Milito, Heinze, Banega, Mascherano, Cambiasso, Messi (D'Alessandro 89), Higuain (Aguero 68), Tevez (Di Maria 60).
Spain: Reina (Valdes 46) - Arbeloa, Pique, Marchena, Monreal, Busquets, Xabi Alonso (Pedro 71), Iniesta (Cazorla 46), Fabregas (Xavi 56), Villa (Llorente 46), Silva (Jesus Navas 46).

Sep 7 - Montreal
Canada 2 (Simpson 29, McKenna 42)
Honduras 1 (Norales 34)
HT: 2-1. **Att:** 7,525. **Ref:** Geiger (USA)
Canada: Hirschfeld - Stalteri, McKenna, Jakovic, Straith, Johnson, Dunfield (Hutchinson 79), Bernier, Simpson, Friend (Nakajima-Farran 75), Jackson.
Honduras: N Valladares (Canales 46) - Figueroa, Norales, Beckeles (Crisanto 74), B Garcia, J C Garcia (Arzu 69), M Martinez, Claros (Mendoza 80), Espinoza, Bengtson (Rojas 68), C Martinez.

Sep 7 - Nanjing
China 1 (Gao Lin 34)
Paraguay 1 (Barrios 8)
HT: 1-1
China: Zeng Cheng - Zhang Linpeng, Wang Qiang, Feng Xiaoting, Rong Hao, Yu Tao (Liu Jianye), Yang Hao (Zhou Haibin), Feng Renliang (Yan Xiangchuang), Deng Zhuoxiang (Chen Tao), Qu Bo (Yu Hai), Gao Lin (Tan Yang).
Paraguay: Villar - Caniza (Alcaraz 46), Roman, Molinas, Santa Cruz, Aquino (C Ortiz 46), Santana (Vera 46), Da Silva, Camacho (Estigarribia 63), Torres, Barrios (J Ortigoza 80).

Sep 7 - Tallinn
Estonia 3 (Purje 25, Vassiljev 63, pen 72)
Uzbekistan 3 (Shatskikh 39, 85, Geynrikh 55)
HT: 1-1. **Att:** 2,055. **Ref:** Jones (Wal)
Estonia: Kotenko (Aksalu 46) - Kams (Sisov 83), Morozov, Barengrub, Sidorenkov, Purje (Kruglov 65), Vunk (Vassiljev 58), Dmitrijev, Kink, Saag (Post 65), Zahovaiko (Zenjov 58).
Uzbekistan: Nesterov - Krushelnitsky, Juraev, Denisov, Karpenko (Ismailov 80), Mullajanov, Galiullin (Ahmedov 51), Taran (Novkarov 75), Kapadze (Turayev 86), Shatskikh, Geynrikh (Salomov 83).

Sep 7 - Fort Lauderdale, USA
Jamaica 1 (Cummings 19)
Peru 2 (Phillips og 4, J C Fernandez 84)
HT: 1-1. **Ref:** Vaughn (USA)
Jamaica: Miller - A Reid, J Taylor, Edwards, Thomas, Addtery (R Johnson 69), Vernan, Phillips (Palmer 77), Morrison, Shelton (Richards 69), Cummings (Boyd 72).
Peru: Libman - Zambrano (Guizasola 46), Acasiete (Vilchez 46), Galliquio, Rabanal, Gonzales (Ballon 64), Torres (Advincula 63), Farfan, Vargas, Manco (Tragodara 46), Rengifo (J C Fernandez 83).

Sep 7 - Osaka
Japan 2 (Morimoto 12, 20)
Guatemala 1 (M Rodriguez 22)
HT: 2-1. **Att:** 44,541. **Ref:** Archundia (Mex)
Japan: Narazaki - Komano, Iwamasa, Nagatomo (Nagata 46), Makino, Hashimoto, Hosogai, Honda, Inui (Fujimoto 46), Kagawa (Okazaki 66), Morimoto (K Nakamura 83).
Guatemala: Trigueno (Molina 46) - Cabrera, R Rodriguez, Gallardo, J Lopez, Castillo, Ramirez (M Lopez 61), Cotto (Chinchilla 46), Aguilar (Estacuy 67), M Rodriguez (Pezzarossi 78), Giron (Castrillo 46).

Sep 7 - Monterrey
Mexico 1 (E Hernandez 88)
Colombia 0
HT: 0-0. **Ref:** Pineda (ElS)
Mexico: G Ochoa - Lopez, Moreno (F Rodriguez 64), Flores, Salcido, Marquez (Torrado 55), Rios, Barrera (E Hernandez 55), Guardado (Esqueda 67), G Dos Santos (Vela 74), J Hernandez (Orozco 71).
Colombia: Ospina - Zuniga, I Cordoba, Yepes, Valencia, Viafara, J Restrepo, Anchico (D Moreno 52), G Moreno, A Ramos (Cuadrado 66), Falcao Garcia (Rodallega 58).

Sep 7 - Panama City
Panama 3 (Aguilar 13, Tejada 76, Gomez pen 87)
Trinidad & Tobago 0
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 5,211
Panama: Calderon - Cummings, Gomez (L Henriquez 54), R Torres (Barahona 88), Aguilar, Machado, Bonaga (Gomez 60), Buitrago (Quintero 80), Jimenez (Glaize Yau 67), A Henriquez, Renteria (Tejada 67).
Trinidad & Tobago: J M Williams (Phillip 46) - A Edwards (J Jones 46), Cyrus, Cupid, K Williams, Noel, Tinto, Carter (Guerra 56), Theobald (Young 77), Marcano (K Baptiste 69), Jorsling.

Sep 7 - Krakow
Poland 1 (Lewandowski 17)
Australia 2 (Holman 13, Wilkshire pen 25)
HT: 1-2. **Att:** 18,000. **Ref:** Bebek (Cro)
Poland: Tyton - Zewlakow, Wojtkowiak, Pietrasiak (Smolarek 69), Boenisch, Peszko (Grosicki 75), Piszczek, Murawski, Blaszczykowski, Jelen (Iwanski 82), Lewandowski.
Australia: Federici - Neill, Carney, Wilkshire, McKain, Cahill (Vidosic 75), Holman (Emerton 28), Jedinak, Valeri (Culina 55), Garcia, McDonald (Burns 80). *Sent off: Emerton 71min.*

Sep 7 - Doha
Qatar 1 (Fabio Cesar 68)
Oman 1 (Al Hosni 55)
HT: 0-0

Sep 7 - Seoul
South Korea 0
Iran 1 (Shojaei 35)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 38,642. **Ref:** Mohd Salleh (Mly)
South Korea: Jung Sung-ryong - Hong Jeong-ho (Park Joo-ho 90), Lee Jung-soo, Kim Young-kwon, Choi Hyo-jin (Cha Du-ri 70), Yoon Bitgaram (Kim Do-heon 46), Ki Sung-yueng (Kim Jung-woo 46; Cho Young-cheol 66), Lee Young-pyo, Lee Chung-yong (Seok Hyun-joon 78), Park Chu-young, Park Ji-sung.
Iran: M Rahmati - P Nouri (Omranzadeh 83), M Nosrati, J Hosseini, Aghili, Teymourian, Nekounam, Shojaei (Nowroozi 90+3), Hajsafy, Gholami (Ansarifard 36; Ouladi 73), G Rezaei (Khalatbary 78).

Sep 7 - Kiev
Ukraine 2 (Rakitskyi 36, Aliyev 65)
Chile 1 (Isla 87)
HT: 1-0. **Ref:** Sevastsyanik (Bls)
Ukraine: Dykan - Mandziuk, Mykhalyk, Rakitskyi, Romanchuk (Poliovy 75), Husiev, Tymoshchuk, Khudobiak (Aliyev 53), Konoplianka (Kozhanov 71), Devic (Selezniov 81), Shevchenko (Krasnopiorov 71).
Chile: Marin - Labrin, O Gonzalez, Estrada (Aranguiz 72), Isla, Millar, Tello (Mena 46), Morales, Meneses (Fuenzalida 56), Mancilla, Hernandez.

Sep 7 - Abu Dhabi
United Arab Emirates 3 (Khalil 23, Matar 40, Al Kathiri 90)
Kuwait 0
HT: 2-0

Sep 7 - Barquisimeto
Venezuela 1 (Fedor 85)
Ecuador 0
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 25,000. **Ref:** Moreno (Pan)
Venezuela: D Hernandez - Lucena, Perozo, Bustamante, Granados, Chourio (Di Giorgi 72), Rincon, C Gonzalez (Rosales 86), Seijas (Guerra 79), Renteria (S Rondon 66), Fedor (Flores 90).
Ecuador: Banguera (Aragon 50) - Paredes, Caicedo, Checa, W Ayovi, Valencia, Noboa (De Jesus 90), Quiroz, Arroyo (Rojas 59), J Ayovi, Montero (Nazareno 76).

Sep 7 - Sana'a
Yemen 2 (Al Nono pen 18, 55)
Syria 1 (Barakat 29)
HT: 1-1

Wednesday, September 8

Sep 8 - New Delhi
India 1 (Pradeep 60)
Thailand 2 (Teerathep 48, Keerati 64)
HT: 0-0

Friday, September 10

Sep 10 - Belmopan
Belize 0
Trinidad & Tobago 0
Trinidad & Tobago: Phillip - J Jones, Hislop, Mitchell (A Edwards 46), Cupid, Guerra (Carter 55), Young (Tinto 46), Noel (Cyrus 35), Hector, Bartholemew (Jorsling 46), K Baptiste (Marcano 60).

Sep 10 - Vieux Fort
St Lucia 1 (Joseph)
St Vincent & The Grenadines 5 (George, Samuel x2, Snagg, Cuffy)

Wednesday, September 15

Sep 15 - New Delhi
India 2 (Wadoo 28, Pereira 54)
Namibia 0
HT: 1-0

FRIENDLIES – FIXTURES

Games announced so far for the next few months

Oct 6	Bermuda v Trinidad & Tobago
Oct 8	China v Syria
	Ecuador v Colombia (New York)
	India v Vietnam
	Japan v Argentina (Saitama)
	Kuwait v Bahrain
	Oman v Gabon
	Qatar v Iraq (Doha)
	Ukraine v Canada (Lviv)
Oct 9	Australia v Paraguay (Sydney)
	Indonesia v Uruguay
	New Zealand v Honduras (Auckland)
	United States v Poland (Chicago)
Oct 10	Jamaica v Trinidad & Tobago (Kingston)
Oct 12	Ecuador v Poland (Toronto)
	Mexico v Venezuela (Juarez)
	New Zealand v Paraguay (Wellington)
	Oman v Chile (Muscat)
	Qatar v Gabon
	South Korea v Japan (Seoul)
	United States v Colombia (Chester)
Oct 13	Indonesia v Ivory Coast
Oct 22	Egypt v Kuwait
Nov 17	Argentina v Brazil (Doha, Qatar)
	Austria v Greece
	China v Latvia (Beijing)
	Denmark v Czech Republic (Aarhus)
	Ecuador v Venezuela (Quito)
	England v France (London)
	Holland v Turkey (Amsterdam)
	Hong Kong v Paraguay (Hong Kong)
	Iraq v Kuwait (Dubai)
	Jordan v Cyprus (Amman)
	Luxembourg v Algeria
	Poland v Ivory Coast (Poznan)
	Portugal v Spain
	Republic of Ireland v Norway (Dublin)
	Sweden v Germany (Gothenburg)
	Switzerland v Ukraine (Geneva)
Nov 24	Indonesia v East Timor (Jakarta)
Dec 17	Iraq v Syria
Dec 19	Argentina v Brazil (La Plata)
Dec 22	Syria v Iraq
Dec 29	Jordan v China (Dubai)
Jan 2	Jordan v Uzbekistan (Dubai)
Feb 9	Belgium v Finland
	France v Brazil (Paris)
	Germany v Italy (Dortmund)
	Holland v Austria (Amsterdam)
	Malta v Switzerland (Valletta)

worldmags

Euro success...Montenegro's Zverotic (left) gets the better of Wales' Robert Earnshaw in Podgorica

MONTENEGRO

Minnows making their mark

MONTENEGRO'S impressive start to the Euro 2012 qualifying campaign – six points in two games, at home to Wales and away to Bulgaria – surely came as a surprise, but the success is not by chance.

After all, the youngest and one of the smallest UEFA members – with a population of just 650,000 – have already climbed to 40th place in the FIFA rankings. That's a remarkable achievement given that in early 2007, following independence from Serbia in 2006, Montenegro started at the bottom of the rankings.

"We fulfilled our dream to start the qualification campaign with two victories," said national coach Zlatko Kranjcar after the 1-0 win against Bulgaria in Sofia. "In February, when I took over the team, I told the players, media and fans that we were heading in this direction. I was convinced that this team possessed quality."

Indeed, in February, Croat coach Kranjcar said Montenegro had similar qualities to the Croatia national side, and back then many laughed at his remark, with some claiming that it was the first faux pas of his new job.

Of course, it's too early, and probably too bold, to speculate that Montenegro can finish in second place in their group. If they did, it would be a sensation, given they were drawn from the fifth pool, behind England, Switzerland, Bulgaria and Wales.

On paper Montenegro are underdogs, but they don't feel as such. Montenegrins are fundamentally proud people and a part of the rich football tradition of the former Yugoslavia. The current side have some fine players and demonstrated their potential in the 2010 World Cup qualifiers, collecting nine points, including two draws against the group runners-up, the Republic of Ireland.

In that campaign, under previous coach Zoran Filipovic, a lack of experience and some bad luck cost them. For example, they drew 2-2 at home to Bulgaria when they conceded an equaliser from a free-kick in the last minute. In the away game against Italy the "Brave Falcons" played well before being edged out by the *Azzurri*.

However, despite being relative newcomers on the international stage, optimism this time round is sky high.

FA chairman Dejan Savicevic, the former Milan star and Yugoslavia midfielder, reflects the upbeat mood, saying: "We made two big steps, but only if we beat Switzerland [at home on October 8], will we be the main favourites for the runners-up spot.

Quite logically, Montenegro's style of play is virtually the same as the style of their former compatriots Serbia, Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina. Kranjcar – himself an excellent striker in the 1970s and 80s, and a legend with Dinamo Zagreb and Rapid Wien – favours attacking football and likes to deploy a 4-4-2 formation.

It's a relatively young side, with a blend of experienced players such as Savo Pavicevic, Marko Basa, Milan Jovanovic, Milorad Pekovic, Nikola Drincic and Mirko Vucinic alongside talented youngsters such as Stefan Savic, Simon Vukcevic and Stevan Jovetic.

Sooner or later other youngsters such as Ivan Fatic and Marko Vesovic will also get their chance. And in a few years it's possible that Montenegro might present world football with a new Savicevic or Mijatovic, some even say a new Messi. The youngster in question is Veljko Batrovic, a 16-year-old striker from a local football school in the capital Podgorica who has already been on trial at Arsenal.

Although a lack of depth is a problem, it's remarkable that Montenegro booked their opening two wins without three regulars. First-choice goalkeeper Vukasin Poleksic has been suspended by UEFA from all football activities until June 2012 because of an alleged involvement in match-fixing (a Champions League game between Debrecen and Fiorentina), while Drincic and Jovetic have long-term injuries.

Against Switzerland a fourth regular will be missing – Pekovic for two yellow cards. All the same, the fans in Podgorica expect victory in that game before the match against England, where the "Brave Falcons" have nothing to lose. Some have joked that Montenegro have already "sacked" Stanimir Stoilov (Bulgaria's coach) and John Toshack (Wales manager) – with Fabio Capello next.

But not all are quite so euphoric. Captain Vucinic made the point when he said: "We may not fly too high, because otherwise the fall would be much harder."

Vladimir Novak

On target...Zverotic (right) celebrates his goal against Bulgaria

Home advantage...Podgorica City Stadium

THE SQUAD

GOALKEEPERS			Caps	Goals
Srdan BLAZIC	26.11.82	Standard Liege (Blg)	1	0
Mladen BOZOVIC	01.08.84	Videoton (Hun)	11	0
Ivan JANJUSEVIC	11.07.86	Mogren	1	0

DEFENDERS				
Marko BASA	29.12.82	Lokomotiv Moscow (Rus)	9	1
Radoslav BATAK	15.08.77	Mogren	19	1
Drasko BOZOVIC	30.06.88	Mogren	1	0
Miodrag DZUDOVIC	06.09.79	Spartak Nalchik (Rus)	11	1
Ivan FATIC	21.08.88	Genoa (Ita)	4	0
Milan JOVANOVIC	21.07.83	Spartak Nalchik (Rus)	21	0
Savo PAVICEVIC	11.12.80	Maccabi Tel Aviv (Isr)	23	0
Luka PEJOVIC	31.07.85	Mogren	19	0
Stefan SAVIC	08.01.91	Partizan Belgrade (Ser)	1	0
Zarko TOMASEVIC	22.02.90	Nacional (Por)	2	0

MIDFIELDERS				
Branko BOSKOVIC	21.06.80	DC United (USA)	20	1
Vladimir BOZOVIC	13.11.81	Rapid Bucharest (Rom)	22	0
Nikola DRINCIC	07.09.84	Spartak Moscow (Rus)	18	1
Mladen KASCELAN	13.02.83	Jagiellonia Bialystok (Pol)	10	0
Mitar NOVAKOVIC	27.09.81	Amkar Perm (Rus)	15	0
Milorad PEKOVIC	05.08.77	Greuter Furth (Ger)	20	0
Simon VUKCEVIC	29.01.86	Sporting Lisbon (Por)	23	1
Elsad ZVEROTIC	31.10.86	Lucerne (Swi)	19	1

FORWARDS				
Fatos BECIRAJ	05.05.88	Dinamo Zagreb (Cro)	7	0
Radomir DALOVIC	29.11.82	Rijeka (Cro)	17	6
Dejan DAMJANOVIC	27.07.81	Seoul (SKo)	7	2
Andrija DELIBASIC	24.04.81	Rayo Vallecano (Spa)	6	1
Stevan JOVETIC	02.11.89	Fiorentina (Ita)	13	6
Mirko VUCINIC	01.10.83	Roma (Ita)	21	10

COACH	
Zlatko KRANJCAR (Cro)	15.11.56

THE KEY MEN

Talisman...Vucinic

MIRKO VUCINIC
The captain and star of the team, with 10 goals in 21 appearances. His body language on the pitch and his lack of defensive work can irritate, but without him Montenegro simply aren't the same team.

MARKO BASA
Elegant central defender from Lokomotiv Moscow. He finally joined the national team in March after refusing previous requests to play for Montenegro – his father is Montenegrin, but his mother is a Serb and he made the grade at OFK Belgrade.

SIMON VUKCEVIC
Left-footed attacking midfielder. A quick and brilliant technician, but often too selfishly. This summer he was keen to change club, but eventually stayed with Sporting Lisbon.

ZLATKO KRANJCAR
The 53-year-old Croatian was appointed earlier this year and had the worst possible start with three successive defeats in friendlies against Macedonia, Albania and Norway. However, that was followed by three successive victories: a friendly against Northern Ireland and then the great start in the Euro 2012 qualifiers, at home to Wales and in Bulgaria. Some think that Kranjcar could be a good-luck omen as he has never lost a qualifier, having guided Croatia to the World Cup 2006 with seven wins and three draws. That is his biggest achievement, alongside two league titles with Dinamo Zagreb (1996 and 1998) and one, against the odds, with NK Zagreb (2002).

Omen...Kranjcar

Technically gifted...Vukcevic

ASIA

CHAMPIONS LEAGUE

Koreans slip up

WHERE once it looked like three of the four remaining South Korean clubs could progress to the semi-finals of the Asian Champions League, only one has made it through to the last four of the continental championship.

Seongnam Ilhwa, 4-3 aggregate winners over compatriots Suwon Bluewings, are the last men standing from the K-League as defending champions Pohang Steelers and former winners Jeonbuk Motors were both eliminated by clubs from west Asia in the quarter-finals.

Pohang fell to Iranian side Zob Ahan, who continued their surprise run by beating the Koreans 3-2 on aggregate, while Jeonbuk succumbed to a 2-1 aggregate loss at the hands of Al Shabab from Saudi Arabia.

Mohammad Reza Khalatbari scored 10 minutes from time to earn Zob Ahan a 1-1 draw in the return fixture away from home to oust the champions from the competition.

"We concentrated on attacking in the second half," said Zob Ahan coach Mansour Ebrahimzadeh. "My players did their best.

"All the teams that have qualified for the semi-finals have a possibility. In order to challenge for the crown, we have to unite ourselves as a team."

Zob Ahan will now take on former Asian champions Al Hilal, one of two Saudi clubs to reach the last four of the competition.

Eric Gerets' side won the first leg against Al Gharafa 3-0 in Riyadh but were made to fight all the way as the Qatari side scored three times in the first half of the return in Doha to level the aggregate score.

The game went into extra time, when Iraq international striker Younus Mahmood scored his second of the game to give Al Gharafa a 4-3 aggregate lead only for Yasser Al Qahtani and Eysa Al Mahyani to finally respond for Al Hilal. Those goals meant that, despite losing 4-2 on the evening, Al Hilal progressed and Gerets was a relieved man.

"It was very difficult for us until the last few minutes," said the Belgian. "I realised we needed a miracle and we found one. I would like to compliment Gharafa on playing a great game.

"For the last 18 months, my team has shown very good levels of fitness and that was the key today. My players are very fit. This game showed fitness matters a lot. I don't want to be negative. We got the result."

Al Hilal's compatriots Al Shabab also progressed to the last four, where they will meet Seongnam Ilhwa.

Al Shabab went through 2-1 on aggregate, despite losing 1-0 to former champions Jeonbuk Motors in Riyadh.

Kim Jee-wong scored midway through the first half to give Jeonbuk a glimmer of hope but Choi Kang-hee's side were unable to score again.

"The game was really hard for us and there was a lot of pressure on our players," said Al Shabab coach Jorge Fossati. "I'm satisfied with the performance despite the defeat.

"The good win that we had in Korea Republic helped us a lot to advance to the semi-finals.

"Any team who plays away tries to get a draw or at least a narrow defeat, but we did a good job of taking a two-goal advantage. Things were really critical."

Seongnam had their 4-1 first-leg win to thank for their progression to the semi-finals after they lost the return fixture against Suwon Bluewings 2-0 a week later.

Yeom Ki-hyun and Lee Sang-ho scored to take Suwon agonizingly close to their target, but in the end they were unable to overhaul the first-leg deficit.

"We have now come through the group stage and then the second round and quarter-final and we are hungry to win the competition," said Seongnam coach Shin Tae-yong.

"The players are hungry and we want to win it for the K-League."

Michael Church

> "All the teams that have qualified for the semi-finals have a possibility. We have to unite as a team" *Zob Ahan coach Mansour Ebrahimzadeh*

On their way...Al Qahtani celebrates his goal for Al Hilal against Al Gharafa

Down and out...Jeonbuk (in green) beat Al Shabab in the second leg, but went out on aggregate

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worldmags

PEOPLE in the news

New man in charge...Portuguese football federation president Gilberto Madail (right) welcomes Bento

Bento appointed Portugal manager

EUROPE

Former Sporting Lisbon boss PAULO BENTO replaced CARLOS QUEIROZ as coach of Portugal. The 41-year-old, who won 35 caps for his country as a defensive midfielder, will need to galvanise a side low on confidence after a slow start to Euro 2012 qualifying, with his first game coming on October 8 against Denmark. Bento left Sporting last year after four seasons in charge and has signed a deal with the national side until 2012. Real Madrid's JOSE MOURINHO said he would be interested in taking charge on a two-game basis but this was blocked by his club.

Ex-Liverpool and Lyon boss GERARD HOULLIER was appointed manager of Aston Villa. The 63-year-old left his post as technical director at the French Football Federation to return to English football after six years away. He took over from caretaker KEVIN MACDONALD, who had been in charge since MARTIN O'NEILL left in August.

A week after being confirmed as Germany captain, MICHAEL BALLACK – who missed the World Cup finals with an ankle injury – fractured his left shin playing for Bayer Leverkusen against Hannover in the Bundesliga.

Crocked...Ballack

Norway Under-21 coach OYSTEIN GARE died aged 56 after a short illness. He had been on sick leave following the diagnosis of his illness, with TOR OLE SKULLERUD taking temporary charge.

JOHN TOSHACK left his position as Wales' national coach after his side lost their opening Euro 2012 qualifier 1-0 away to Montenegro. Wales Under-21 boss BRIAN FLYNN was confirmed as caretaker manager for the country's next two qualifiers, against Bulgaria and Switzerland in October.

Former Tottenham Hotspur forward BOBBY SMITH, who was a member of the club's double-winning side in the 1960-61 season, died at the age of 77 following a short illness. He scored 13 goals in 15 appearances for England.

Austria Wien and Slovenia striker MILENKO ACIMOVIC retired aged 33 because of knee problems. He also played for Red Star Belgrade, Tottenham Hotspur and Lille.

Quit...Acimovic

SOUTH AMERICA

Nacional defender DIEGO RODRIGUEZ died after he suffered head injuries in a car crash. The 22-year-old had started all three of his side's matches in the Uruguayan apertura this season.

DANIEL GARNERO resigned as coach of Independiente after a 4-0 defeat by Banfield left the club bottom of the Argentinian first division. General manager CESAR LUIS MENOTTI, Argentina's 1978 World Cup-winning coach who had recommended Garnero's appointment, also quit.

Santos parted company with coach DORIVAL following a series of disputes with starlet Neymar.

Fatality...Rodriguez (right)

AFRICA

MILOVAN RAJEVAC quit as national coach of Ghana and joined Saudi club Al Ahli. The Serb guided the Black Stars to the Final of the African Nations Cup and the quarter-finals of the World Cup this year.

A member of Italy's World Cup-winning squad in 1982, GIUSEPPE DOSSENA has been appointed coach of Ethiopian league champions Saint George on a two-year contract. The 52-year-old coached Ghana from 1998 to 2000, and was in charge of Albania in 2002.

ABDELHAK BENCHIKHA is the new coach of Algeria. He replaces RABAH SAADANE, who resigned after the national side's disappointing 1-1 draw against Tanzania in an Africa Nations Cup qualifier.

Former Manchester City and Blackburn Rovers defender ANDY MORRISON is the new Seychelles coach.

Kenya appointed JACOB MULEE as national coach for the second time, following the resignation of TWAHIR MUHIDDIN. Mulee led the country to the African Nations Cup in 2004.

New start...Benchikha is Algeria's new boss

PEOPLE in the news

Back home...Teymourian

ASIA

Iran defensive midfielder ANDRANIK TEYMOURIAN returned home to join Tabriz-based club Tractor Sazi after playing in England with Bolton Wanders, Fulham and Barnsley.

CONCACAF

Former Scotland striker MO JOHNSTON and ex-USA and Everton midfielder PREKI have been sacked as director and coach respectively of Canadian MLS side Toronto. Assistant coach NICK DASOVIC, who coached Canada's Under-23 side in the 2008 Olympic qualifiers, took charge of the team on an interim basis.

Former Mexico coach RICARDO LAVOLPE took charge of Costa Rica, replacing interim boss RONALD GONZALEZ.

Guatemalan referee CARLOS BATRES, who officiated at two World Cups and took charge of the Paraguay v Spain quarter-final this summer, announced his retirement.

EDSON TAVARES was appointed coach of Haiti's national side. His coaching career has included previous stints in China, Vietnam, Tunisia, Kuwait, Jordan and Switzerland.

Signing off...World Cup official Batres

World Cup finalist...Varallo

OBITUARY

Francisco Varallo (1910-2010)

The last surviving player from the first World Cup Final, between Uruguay and Argentina in Montevideo in 1930, has died, aged 100.

Varallo, born on February 5, 1910, in La Plata, Argentina, was a powerful forward who was nicknamed "*El Canoncito*" (little cannon) because of his exceptional shooting ability.

He was the youngest player to compete in the first World Cup when he played for Argentina in the tournament in Uruguay at the age of 20. He injured his knee in the final group match against Chile and could not take part in the semi-final, but returned for the Final.

"I played my heart out in the second half and I could feel it in my knee," he had recalled. "We were down to 10 men and as the match went on another was injured, then another.

"I aggravated my injury when hitting the bar with a shot that could have won it for us. I couldn't even walk. From that point on, they [Uruguay] started to get stronger and, with all due respect to my team-mates, we weren't gutsy enough. How I cried that day. Even now when I look back it still makes me angry."

Varallo played for home-town club Gimnasia between 1928 and 1930, winning the amateur championship in 1929. A year later, he was transferred to Boca Juniors, where he remained for the rest of his career until retirement in 1940.

With Boca, Varallo won the Professional League in 1931, 1934 and 1935, as well as finishing runners-up in 1933 – a year in which he finished as the local league's top scorer, and South America's marksman, with 34 goals.

In his nine years at Boca, Varallo became the club's top scorer of the professional era with 194 goals in 222 matches, a record that stood until 2009, when it was broken by Martin Palermo.

Varallo was a vital part of the Argentina team that won the South American Championship in 1937, as he scored three goals, including two goals in a 2-1 win over Chile.

ON THE MOVE Transfer-window deadline deals

- DaMarcus Beasley – unattached to Hannover
- Jean Beausejour – America (Mex) to Birmingham City
- Hatem Ben Arfa – Marseille to Newcastle United (loan)
- Marco Boriello – Milan to Roma (loan)
- Nicolas Burdisso – Internazionale to Roma
- Mauro Camoranesi – Juventus to Stuttgart
- Carlos Eduardo – Hoffenheim to Rubin Kazan
- Antonio Da Silva – Karlsruhe to Borussia Dortmund
- Pape Diakhate – Dynamo Kyiv to Lyon (loan)
- Franco Di Santo – Chelsea to Wigan
- Royston Drenthe – Real Madrid to Hercules (loan)
- Aldo Duscher – Sevilla to Espanyol
- Alexei Eremenko – Metalist Kharkiv to Kilmarnock (loan)
- Gelson Fernandes – Saint-Etienne to Chievo (loan)
- Eidur Gudjohnsen – Monaco to Stoke City
- Asamoah Gyan – Rennes to Sunderland (£13m)
- Rafik Halliche – Benfica to Fulham
- Alexander Hleb – Barcelona to Birmingham City (loan)
- Klaas-Jan Huntelaar – Milan to Schalke (£10.5m)
- Zlatan Ibrahimovic – Barcelona to Milan (loan)
- Emiliano Insua – Liverpool to Galatasaray (loan)
- Martin Jiranek – Spartak Moscow to Birmingham City
- Jose Manuel Jurado – Atletico Madrid to Schalke
- Paul Konchesky – Fulham to Liverpool
- Peter Kovacs – Odd Grenland to Lierse
- Mbaye Leye – Gent to Standard Liege
- Danijel Ljuboja – Grenoble to Nice
- Javier Mascherano – Liverpool to Barcelona (£17.25m)
- Rodrigo Moreno – Benfica to Bolton Wanderers (loan)
- Aloys Nong – Mechelen to Standard Liege (£1.02m)
- Victor Obinna – Internazionale to West Ham United (loan)
- Jermaine Pennant – Real Zaragoza to Stoke City (loan)
- Nicolas Plestan – Lille to Schalke
- Stipe Pletikosa – Spartak Moscow to Tottenham Hotspur (loan)
- Waldo Ponce – O'Higgins (Chl) to Racing Santander (loan)
- Fabio Quagliarella – Napoli to Juventus (loan)
- Raul Meireles – Porto to Liverpool (£11.5m)
- Maceo Rigters – Blackburn Rovers to Willem II (loan)
- Leandro Rinaudo – Napoli to Juventus (loan)
- Robinho – Manchester City to Milan
- Markus Rosenberg – Werder Bremen to Racing Santander (loan)
- Paul Scharner – unattached to West Bromwich Albion
- Gylfi Sigurdsson – Reading to Hoffenheim (£6m)
- Mikael Silvestre – unattached to Werder Bremen
- Jose Ernesto Sosa – Bayern Munich to Napoli
- Sebastien Squillaci – Sevilla to Arsenal
- Marius Stankevicius – Sampdoria to Valencia (loan)
- Vladimir Stojkovic – Red Star Belgrade to Partizan Belgrade
- Anthony Stokes – Hibernian to Celtic (£1.2m)
- Teemu Tainio – Sunderland to Ajax
- Mohammed Tchite – Racing Santander to Standard Liege
- Siaka Tiene – Valenciennes to Paris Saint-Germain
- Cheik Tiote – Twente to Newcastle United
- Armand Traore – Arsenal to Juventus (loan)
- David Trezeguet – unattached to Hercules
- Rafael Van der Vaart – Real Madrid to Tottenham Hotspur (£8m)
- Jan Vennegoor of Hesselink – unattached to Rapid Wien
- Joseph Yobo – Everton to Fenerbahce (loan)

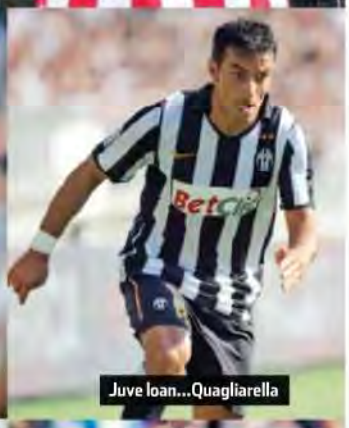
Toon star...Ben Arfa

Germany calling...Camoranesi

Real deal...Drenthe

Record buy...Gyan

Nou arrival...Mascherano


Juve loan...Quagliarella

Moving on...Robinho

Spurs signing...Van der Vaart

Debut...McEachran

ENGLAND

Young talent

Seventeen-year-old Josh McEachran, who made his first-team debut in Chelsea's 4-1 win away to Zilina, became the first player born after the inception of the competition to play in the Champions League.

Elsewhere, former Chelsea midfielder Joe Cole scored Liverpool's fastest-ever goal in Europe, putting the Reds in front against Steaua Bucharest after just 26 seconds of their Europa League game. Roy Hodgson's side went on to win 4-1 to make him the club's only manager to win his first five continental matches.

GREECE

Proud home record

Aris beat defending Europa League champions Atletico Madrid 1-0 with a goal from Spanish striker Javito to extend their record of never having lost at home in Europe to 22 games.

ISRAEL

Beaten once again

Hapoel Tel Aviv's 2-0 defeat away to Benfica continued a miserable run for Israeli clubs in the group stage of the Champions League, with the

Aris hero...Javito

RESULTS

EUROPE

EUROPEAN SUPER CUP

(Champions League holders, Internazionale v Europa League holders, Atletico Madrid)

Aug 27 - Monaco
Internazionale (Ita) 0
Atletico Madrid (Spa) 2 (Reyes 62, Aguero 83)
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 18,500. **Ref:** Busacca (Swi)
Inter: Julio Cesar - Maicon, Lucio, Samuel, Chivu, Stankovic (Pandev 68), Cambiasso, Zanetti, Sneijder (Coutinho 79), Eto'o, Milito.
Atletico: De Gea - Ujfalusi, Godin, Perea, Dominguez, Reyes (Merida 69), Paulo Assuncao, Raul Garcia, Simao (Camacho 90+2), Forlan (Jurado 82), Aguero.

CHAMPIONS LEAGUE

Group A

Sep 14
Twente Enschede (Hol) 2 (Janssen 20, Milito og 30)
Internazionale (Ita) 2 (Sneijder 13, Eto'o 41)
HT: 2-2. **Att:** 23,800. **Ref:** Proenca (Por)
Twente: Mihailov - Rosales, Douglas, Wisgerhof, Tiendalli, Brama, De Jong, Janssen, Ruiz, Janko (Bajrami 78), Chadli (Landzaat 88).
Inter: Julio Cesar - Maicon, Lucio, Samuel, Zanetti, Cambiasso, Sneijder, Mariga, Eto'o, Milito (Muntari 87), Pandev (Coutinho 61).

Sep 14
Werder Bremen (Ger) 2 (Hugo Almeida 43, Marin 47)
Tottenham (Eng) 2 (Pasanen og 12, Crouch 18)
HT: 1-2. **Att:** 30,344. **Ref:** Busacca (Swi)
Werder: Wiese - Fritz, Prodl, Pasanen, Silvestre, Frings, Bargfrede (Hunt 37), Marin, Wesley (Borowski 67), Hugo Almeida (Wagner 79), Arnautovic.
Tottenham: Cudicini - Corluka, Kaboul, King, Assou-Ekotto, Jenas, Huddlestone, Lennon (Palacios 75), Van der Vaart (Keane 49), Bale, Crouch.

CHAMPIONS LEAGUE – GROUP A

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Inter	1	0	1	0	2	2	1
Tottenham	1	0	1	0	2	2	1
Twente	1	0	1	0	2	2	1
Werder	1	0	1	0	2	2	1

Sep 14	Twente v Internazionale..... 2-2
	Werder v Tottenham..... 2-2
Sep 29	Internazionale v Werder
	Tottenham v Twente
Oct 20	Internazionale v Tottenham
	Twente v Werder
Nov 2	Tottenham v Internazionale
	Werder v Twente
Nov 24	Internazionale v Twente
	Tottenham v Werder
Dec 7	Twente v Tottenham
	Werder v Internazionale

Group B

Sep 14
Benfica (Por) 2 (Luisao 21, Cardozo 68)
Hapoel Tel Aviv (Isr) 0
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 31,512. **Ref:** Nikolaev (Rus)
Benfica: Roberto - Ruben Amorim, Luisao, David Luiz, Fabio Coentrao, Javi Garcia, Carlos Martins, Aimar (Airton 71), Gaitan (Pereira 57), Saviola (Cesar Peixoto 87), Cardozo.
Hapoel: Enyeama - Bondarv, Douglas, Fransman (Badir 74), Ben Dayan, Rocchi (Shivhon 61), Zahavi, Yadin, Vermouth, Shechter, Sahar (Tamuz 57).

Sep 14
Lyon (Fra) 1 (Michel Bastos 21)
Schalke (Ger) 0
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 35,552. **Ref:** Bebek (Cro)
Lyon: Lloris - Reveillere, Diakhate, Lovren, Kolodziejczak, Toulalan, Pjanic, Gourcuff (Makoun 86), Briand (Kallstrom 90+2), Michel Bastos (Pied 71), Lopez.
Schalke: Neuer - Moritz, Howedes, Plestan, Sarpei (Schmitz 75), Jones (Kluge 70), Rakitic, Farfan, Deac (Matip 45), Raul, Huntelaar. *Sent off: Howedes 38min.*

CHAMPIONS LEAGUE – GROUP B

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Benfica	1	1	0	0	2	0	3
Lyon	1	1	0	0	1	0	3
Schalke	1	0	0	1	0	1	0
Hapoel Tel Aviv	1	0	0	1	0	2	0

Sep 14	Benfica v Hapoel Tel Aviv..... 2-0
	Lyon v Schalke..... 1-0
Sep 29	Hapoel Tel Aviv v Lyon
	Schalke v Benfica
Oct 20	Lyon v Benfica
	Schalke v Hapoel Tel Aviv
Nov 2	Benfica v Lyon
	Hapoel Tel Aviv v Schalke
Nov 24	Hapoel Tel Aviv v Benfica
	Schalke v Lyon
Dec 7	Benfica v Schalke
	Lyon v Hapoel Tel Aviv

Group C

Sep 14
Bursaspor (Tur) 0
Valencia (Spa) 4 (Tino Costa 16, Aduriz 41, Pablo Hernandez 68, Soldado 76)
HT: 0-2. **Att:** 20,300. **Ref:** Moen (Nor)
Bursaspor: Ivankov - Ali, Omer, Stepanov, Gokcek, Volkan, Insua, Huseyin (Sercan 60), Ergic (Svensson 77), Ozan, Nunez (Turgay 60).
Valencia: Cesar Sanchez - Bruno, Ricardo Costa, David Navarro, Mathieu, Tino Costa (Manuel Fernandes 81), Mehmet, Joaquin, Dominguez (Mata 77), Pablo Hernandez, Aduriz (Soldado 73).

Sep 14
Manchester United (Eng) 0
Rangers (Sco) 0
Att: 74,408. **Ref:** Benquerenca (Por)
Man United: Kuszczak - Brown, Ferdinand, Smalling, Fabio (Evans 76), Valencia (Giggs 63), Fletcher, Gibson, Park (Owen 76), Rooney, Hernandez.
Rangers: McGregor - Naismith, Whittaker, Weir, Papac, Broadfoot, Bougherra, Edu, McCulloch, Davis, Miller (Lafferty 81).

CHAMPIONS LEAGUE – GROUP C

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Valencia	1	1	0	0	4	0	3
Man United	1	0	1	0	0	0	1
Rangers	1	0	1	0	0	0	1
Bursaspor	1	0	0	1	0	4	0

Sep 14	Bursaspor v Valencia 0-4
	Man United v Rangers..... 0-0
Sep 29	Rangers v Bursaspor
	Valencia v Man United
Oct 20	Man United v Bursaspor
	Rangers v Valencia
Nov 2	Bursaspor v Man United
	Valencia v Rangers
Nov 24	Rangers v Man United
	Valencia v Bursaspor
Dec 7	Bursaspor v Rangers
	Man United v Valencia

Group D

Sep 14
Barcelona (Spa) 5 (Messi 22, 45, Villa 33, Pedro 78, Daniel Alves 90+3)
Panathinaikos (Gre) 1 (Govou 20)
HT: 3-1. **Att:** 69,738. **Ref:** Rizzoli (Ita)
Barcelona: Valdes - Daniel Alves, Pique (Milito 75), Puyol, Abidal, Xavi (Mascherano 79), Busquets, Iniesta, Messi, Villa (Bojan 69), Pedro.
Panathinaikos: Tzorvas - Marinos, Boumsong, Kante, Vyntra, Gilberto Silva, Simao, Govou (Luis Garcia 70), Katsouranis (Karagounis 64), Leto (Ninis 80), Cisse.

Sep 14
Copenhagen (Den) 1 (N'Doye 87)
Rubin Kazan (Rus) 0
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 29,661. **Ref:** Einwaller (Aut)
Copenhagen: Wiland - Pospech, Ottesen, Antonsson, Wendt, Vingaard (Jorgensen 90), Claudemir (Norregaard 90), Kvist, Gronkjaer, N'Doye, Santin (Bolanos 75).
Rubin: Ryzhikov - Salukvadze, Orekhov, Bocchetti (Kuzmin 65), Ansaldi, Kaleshin, Murawski, Noboa, Carlos Eduardo (Gokdeniz 77), Kornilenko, Martins (Kasaev 58).

CHAMPIONS LEAGUE – GROUP D

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Barcelona	1	1	0	0	5	1	3
Copenhagen	1	1	0	0	1	0	3
Rubin Kazan	1	0	0	1	0	1	0
Panathinaikos	1	0	0	1	1	5	0

Sep 14	Barcelona v Panathinaikos 5-1
	Copenhagen v Rubin..... 1-0
Sep 29	Panathinaikos v Copenhagen
	Rubin v Barcelona
Oct 20	Barcelona v Copenhagen
	Panathinaikos v Rubin
Nov 2	Copenhagen v Barcelona
	Rubin v Panathinaikos
Nov 24	Panathinaikos v Barcelona
	Rubin v Copenhagen
Dec 7	Barcelona v Rubin
	Copenhagen v Panathinaikos

Group E

Sep 15
Bayern Munich (Ger) 2 (Muller 79, Klose 83)
Roma (Ita) 0
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 66,000. **Ref:** Lannoy (Fra)
Bayern: Butt - Lahm, Van Buyten, Badstuber, Contento, Van Bommel, Schweinsteiger, Muller (Pranjic 82), Kroos, Altintop (Klose 68), Olic (Gomez 68).
Roma: Julio Sergio - Rosi, N Burdisso, Juan, Cassetti, Brighi, Pizarro, De Rossi, Perrotta, Totti (Menez 79), Borriello.

Sep 15
CFR Cluj (Rom) 2 (Rada 9, Traore 12)
Basle (Swi) 1 (Stocker 45+2)
HT: 2-1. **Att:** 9,593. **Ref:** Kelly (Rlr)
CFR: Nuno Claro - Panin, Cadu, Hugo Alcantara, Rada, Hora (Kone 54), Dica, Muresan, Culio, Traore (Sforzini 79), Rafael (De Zerbi 54).
Basle: Costanzo - Inkoom, Abraham, Cagdas, Safari (Tembo 73), Shaqiri, Huggel, Yapi, Stocker (Chipperfield 73), Frei, Streller.

CHAMPIONS LEAGUE – GROUP E

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Bayern	1	1	0	0	2	0	3
CFR Cluj	1	1	0	0	2	1	3
Basle	1	0	0	1	1	2	0
Roma	1	0	0	1	0	2	0

Sep 15	Bayern Munich v Roma..... 2-0
	CFR Cluj v Basle..... 2-1
Sep 28	Basle v Bayern Munich
	Roma v CFR Cluj
Oct 19	Bayern Munich v CFR Cluj
	Roma v Basle
Nov 3	Basle v Roma
	CFR Cluj v Bayern Munich
Nov 23	Basle v CFR Cluj
	Roma v Bayern Munich
Dec 8	Bayern Munich v Basle
	CFR Cluj v Roma

Group F

Sep 15
Marseille (Fra) 0
Spartak Moscow (Rus) 1 (Azpilicueta og 81)
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 45,729. **Ref:** Meyer (Ger)
Marseille: Mandanda - Azpilicueta, Hilton, Heinze, Taiwo, Cisse, Valbuena, Gonzalez (J Ayew 83), Cheyrou, A Ayew, Brandao (Gignac 62).
Spartak: Dykan - Parshivlyuk, Pareja, Suchy, Makeev, Ibson, Sheshukov (Ari 88), McGeady (Sabitov 83), Alex (Stranzl 90), Kombarov, Welliton.

Sep 15
Zilina (Slk) 1 (Oravec 55)
Chelsea (Eng) 4 (Essien 13, Anelka 24, 28, Sturridge 48)
HT: 0-3. **Att:** 10,829. **Ref:** Kuipers (Hol)
Zilina: Dubravka - Guldan (Angelovic 79), Piacek, Pecalka, Mraz, Rilke (Poliacek 57), Jez, Bello, Vladavic, Oravec, Ceesay (Majtan 62).
Chelsea: Cech - Ivanovic, Alex, Terry, Zhirkov, Mikel, Essien, Benayoun (McEachran 79), Sturridge (Kakuta 62), Anelka, Malouda (Van Aanholt 88).

CHAMPIONS LEAGUE – GROUP F

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Chelsea	1	1	0	0	4	1	3
Spartak M'cow	1	1	0	0	1	0	3
Marseille	1	0	0	1	0	1	0
Zilina	1	0	0	1	1	4	0

country's representatives having now lost their last seven games at this stage of the competition.

ITALY

Ibra's double delight

Zlatan Ibrahimovic marked his home debut for Milan with both goals in the 2-0 Champions League victory over Auxerre.

POLAND

New boy nets treble in six-goal thriller

Lech Poznan striker Artjoms Rudnevs scored a hat-trick against Juventus in Turin to earn his side a 3-3 draw in their opening Europa League group game.

The 22-year-old gave the reigning Polish champions a surprise 2-0 lead, only for Giorgio Chiellini to cancel out the advantage with two goals of his own. Alessandro Del Piero's 54th goal in European competition looked to have settled the match for the Italians, until the Latvia international's late equaliser.

Rudnevs, who joined Lech from Hungarian side Zalaegerszegi in August, has also scored four goals in his first five league appearances.

Great start...Rudnevs

16 consecutive appearances by Manchester United in the group phase of the Champions League – one more than any other club

Sep 15	Marseille v Spartak Moscow.... 0-1
	Zilina v Chelsea..... 1-4
Sep 28	Chelsea v Marseille
	Spartak Moscow v Zilina
Oct 19	Marseille v Zilina
	Spartak Moscow v Chelsea
Nov 3	Chelsea v Spartak Moscow
	Zilina v Marseille
Nov 23	Chelsea v Zilina
	Spartak Moscow v Marseille
Dec 8	Marseille v Chelsea
	Zilina v Spartak Moscow

Group G

Sep 15

Milan (Ita) 2 (Ibrahimovic 66, 69)
Auxerre (Fra) 0
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 69,317. **Ref:** Balaj (Rom)
Milan: Abbiati - Zambrotta, Nesta, Bonera, Antonini (Abate 71), Ambrosini (Boateng 15), Pirlo, Seedorf, Alexandre Pato (Robinho 55), Ibrahimovic, Ronaldinho.
Auxerre: Sorin - Hengbart, Coulibaly, Mignot, Grichting, Oliech, Pedretti, Ndinga, Langil (Chafni 80), Birsa (Le Tallec 73), Jelen.

Sep 15

Real Madrid (Spa) 2 (Anita og 31, Higuain 73)
Ajax (Hol) 0
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 69,639. **Ref:** Skomina (Sln)
Real Madrid: Casillas - Arbeloa, Pepe, Ricardo Carvalho, Marcelo, Khedira, Xabi Alonso (L Diarra 83), Di Maria (Pedro Leon 80), Ozil (Canales 88), Cristiano Ronaldo, Higuain.
Ajax: Stekelenburg - Van der Wiel, Alderweireld, Ooijer, Anita, De Zeeuw (Tainio 69), Enoh, Emanuelson, De Jong, Sulejmani (Eriksen 85), El Hamdaoui.

CHAMPIONS LEAGUE – GROUP G

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Milan	1	1	0	0	2	0	3
Real Madrid	1	1	0	0	2	0	3
Ajax	1	0	0	1	0	2	0
Auxerre	1	0	0	1	0	2	0

Sep 15	Milan v Auxerre..... 2-0
	Real Madrid v Ajax 2-0
Sep 28	Ajax v Milan
	Auxerre v Real Madrid
Oct 19	Ajax v Auxerre
	Real Madrid v Milan
Nov 3	Auxerre v Ajax
	Milan v Real Madrid
Nov 23	Ajax v Real Madrid
	Auxerre v Milan
Dec 8	Milan v Ajax
	Real Madrid v Auxerre

Group H

Sep 15

Arsenal (Eng) 6 (Fabregas pen 9, 53, Arshavin 30, Chamakh 34, Vela 69, 84)
Braga (Por) 0
HT: 3-0. **Att:** 59,333. **Ref:** Hamer (Lux)
Arsenal: Almunia - Sagna, Koscielny, Squillaci, Clichy, Song (Denilson 63), Wilshere, Nasri, Fabregas, Arshavin (Eboue 69), Chamakh (Vela 63).
Braga: Felipe - Miguel Garcia, Moises, Rodriguez, Silvio, Vandinho, Luis Aguiar, Hugo Viana (Mossoro 55), Alan, Matheus (Lima 60), Paulo Cesar (Helder Barbosa 70).

Sep 15

Shakhtar Donetsk (Ukr) 1 (Srna 71)
Partizan Belgrade (Ser) 0
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 48,512. **Ref:** Velasco Carballo (Spa)
Shakhtar: Pyatov - Srna, Kucher, Rakytskyi, Rat, Hubschman, Gai, Douglas Costa, Jadson (Alex Teixeira 58), Willian, Luiz Adriano (Vitsenets 83).
Partizan: Stojkovic - Miljkovic, Savic, Krstajic (Stankovic 90+2), Lazevski, Medo, Smiljanic (Petrovic 74), S Ilic, Tomic, Iliev (Boya 58), Cleo.

CHAMPIONS LEAGUE – GROUP H

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Arsenal	1	1	0	0	6	0	3
Shakhtar	1	1	0	0	1	0	3
Partizan	1	0	0	1	0	1	0
Braga	1	0	0	1	0	6	0

Sep 15	Arsenal v Braga..... 6-0
	Shakhtar v Partizan 1-0
Sep 28	Braga v Shakhtar
	Partizan v Arsenal
Oct 19	Arsenal v Shakhtar
	Braga v Partizan
Nov 3	Partizan v Braga
	Shakhtar v Arsenal
Nov 23	Braga v Arsenal
	Partizan v Shakhtar
Dec 8	Arsenal v Partizan
	Shakhtar v Braga

Top two in each group qualify for 1st knockout round; the third-placed teams enter Europa League at 1st knockout round stage

EUROPA LEAGUE

Group A

Sep 16: Juventus (Ita) 3 Lech Poznan (Pol) 3; Salzburg (Aut) 0 Manchester City (Eng) 2.

EUROPA LEAGUE – GROUP A

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Man City	1	1	0	0	2	0	3
Lech Poznan	1	0	1	0	3	3	1
Juventus	1	0	1	0	3	3	1
Salzburg	1	0	0	1	0	2	0

Remaining fixtures:
Sep 30: Lech Poznan v Salzburg; Manchester City v Juventus. Oct 21: Manchester City v Lech Poznan; Salzburg v Juventus. Nov 4: Juventus v Salzburg; Lech Poznan v Manchester City. Dec 1: Lech Poznan v Juventus; Manchester City v Salzburg. Dec 16: Juventus v Manchester City; Salzburg v Lech Poznan.

Group B

Sep 16: Aris Salonika (Gre) 1 Atletico Madrid (Spa) 0; Bayer Leverkusen (Ger) 4 Rosenborg (Nor) 0.

EUROPA LEAGUE – GROUP B

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
B Leverkusen	1	1	0	0	4	0	3
Aris	1	1	0	0	1	0	3
Atletico	1	0	0	1	0	1	0
Rosenborg	1	0	0	1	0	4	0

Remaining fixtures:
Sep 30: Atletico Madrid v Bayer Leverkusen; Rosenborg v Aris Salonika. Oct 21: Aris Salonika v Bayer Leverkusen; Atletico Madrid v Rosenborg. Nov 4: Bayer Leverkusen v Aris Salonika; Rosenborg v Atletico Madrid. Dec 1: Atletico Madrid v Aris Salonika; Rosenborg v Bayer Leverkusen. Dec 16: Aris Salonika v Rosenborg; Bayer Leverkusen v Atletico Madrid.

Group C

Sep 16: Levski Sofia (Bul) 3 Gent (Blg) 2; Lille (Fra) 1 Sporting Lisbon (Por) 2.

EUROPA LEAGUE – GROUP C

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Levski Sofia	1	1	0	0	3	2	3
Sporting	1	1	0	0	2	1	3
Gent	1	0	0	1	2	3	0
Lille	1	0	0	1	1	2	0

Remaining fixtures:
Sep 30: Gent v Lille; Sporting Lisbon v Levski Sofia. Oct 21: Lille v Levski Sofia; Sporting Lisbon v Gent. Nov 4: Gent v Sporting Lisbon; Levski Sofia v Lille. Dec 1: Gent v Levski Sofia; Sporting Lisbon v Lille. Dec 16: Levski Sofia v Sporting Lisbon; Lille v Gent.

Group D

Sep 16: Club Brugge (Blg) 1 PAOK Salonika (Gre) 1; Dinamo Zagreb (Cro) 2 Villarreal (Spa) 0.

EUROPA LEAGUE – GROUP D

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Dinamo Zagreb	1	1	0	0	2	0	3
PAOK	1	0	1	0	1	1	1
Club Brugge	1	0	1	0	1	1	1
Villarreal	1	0	0	1	0	2	0

Remaining fixtures:
Sep 30: PAOK Salonika v Dinamo Zagreb; Villarreal v Club Brugge. Oct 21: Dinamo Zagreb v Club Brugge; Villarreal v PAOK Salonika. Nov 4: Club Brugge v Dinamo Zagreb; PAOK Salonika v Villarreal. Dec 2: PAOK Salonika v Club Brugge; Villarreal v Dinamo Zagreb. Dec 15: Club Brugge v Villarreal; Dinamo Zagreb v PAOK Salonika.

Group E

Sep 16: AZ Alkmaar (Hol) 2 Sheriff (Mol) 1; Dynamo Kyiv (Ukr) 2 BATE Borisov (Bls) 2.

EUROPA LEAGUE – GROUP E

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
AZ Alkmaar	1	1	0	0	2	1	3
BATE Borisov	1	0	1	0	2	2	1
Dynamo Kyiv	1	0	1	0	2	2	1
Sheriff	1	0	0	1	1	2	0

Remaining fixtures:
Sep 30: BATE Borisov v AZ Alkmaar; Sheriff v Dynamo Kyiv. Oct 21: AZ Alkmaar v Dynamo Kyiv; Sheriff v BATE Borisov. Nov 4: BATE Borisov v Sheriff; Dynamo Kyiv v AZ Alkmaar. Dec 2: BATE Borisov v Dynamo Kyiv; Sheriff v AZ Alkmaar. Dec 15: AZ Alkmaar v BATE Borisov; Dynamo Kyiv v Sheriff.

Group F

Sep 16: Lausanne (Swi) 0 CSKA Moscow (Rus) 3; Sparta Prague (Cze) 3 Palermo (Ita) 2.

EUROPA LEAGUE – GROUP F

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
CSKA Moscow	1	1	0	0	3	0	3
Sparta Prague	1	1	0	0	3	2	3
Palermo	1	0	0	1	2	3	0
Lausanne	1	0	0	1	0	3	0

Remaining fixtures:
Sep 30: CSKA Moscow v Sparta Prague; Palermo v Lausanne. Oct 21: Palermo v CSKA Moscow; Sparta Prague v Lausanne. Nov 4: CSKA Moscow v Palermo; Lausanne v Sparta Prague. Dec 2: CSKA Moscow v Lausanne; Palermo v Sparta Prague. Dec 15: Lausanne v Palermo; Sparta Prague v CSKA Moscow.

Group G

Sep 16: AEK Athens (Gre) 3 Hajduk Split (Cro) 1; Anderlecht (Blg) 1 Zenit St Petersburg (Rus) 3.

EUROPA LEAGUE – GROUP G

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Zenit	1	1	0	0	3	1	3
AEK	1	1	0	0	3	1	3
Anderlecht	1	0	0	1	1	3	0
Hajduk	1	0	0	1	1	3	0

Remaining fixtures:
Sep 30: Hajduk Split v Anderlecht; Zenit v AEK Athens. Oct 21: Anderlecht v AEK Athens; Zenit v Hajduk Split. Nov 4: AEK Athens v Anderlecht; Hajduk Split v Zenit. Dec 1: Hajduk Split v AEK Athens; Zenit v Anderlecht. Dec 16: AEK Athens v Zenit; Anderlecht v Hajduk Split.

Group H

Sep 16: Getafe (Spa) 2 OB Odense (Den) 1; Stuttgart (Ger) 3 Young Boys (Swi) 0.

EUROPA LEAGUE – GROUP H

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Stuttgart	1	1	0	0	3	0	3
Getafe	1	1	0	0	2	1	3
OB Odense	1	0	0	1	1	2	0
Young Boys	1	0	0	1	0	3	0

Remaining fixtures:
Sep 30: OB Odense v Stuttgart; Young Boys v Getafe. Oct 21: Stuttgart v Getafe; Young Boys v OB Odense. Nov 4: Getafe v Stuttgart; OB Odense v Young Boys. Dec 1: OB Odense v Getafe; Young Boys v Stuttgart. Dec 16: Getafe v Young Boys; Stuttgart v OB Odense.

Group I

Sep 16: Debrecen (Hun) 0 Metalist (Ukr) 5; PSV Eindhoven (Hol) 1 Sampdoria (Ita) 1.

EUROPA LEAGUE – GROUP I

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Metalist	1	1	0	0	5	0	3
Sampdoria	1	0	1	0	1	1	1
PSV	1	0	1	0	1	1	1
Debrecen	1	0	0	1	0	5	0

Remaining fixtures:
Sep 30: Metalist v PSV Eindhoven; Sampdoria v Debrecen. Oct 21: Debrecen v PSV Eindhoven; Metalist v Sampdoria. Nov 4: PSV Eindhoven v Debrecen; Sampdoria v Metalist. Dec 1: Metalist v Debrecen; Sampdoria v PSV Eindhoven. Dec 16: Debrecen v Sampdoria; PSV Eindhoven v Metalist.

Group J

Sep 16: Karpaty Lviv (Ukr) 3 Borussia Dortmund (Ger) 4; Sevilla (Spa) 0 Paris Saint-Germain (Fra) 1.

EUROPA LEAGUE – GROUP J

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
B Dortmund	1	1	0	0	4	3	3
PSG	1	1	0	0	1	0	3
Karpaty	1	0	0	1	3	4	0
Sevilla	1	0	0	1	0	1	0

Remaining fixtures:
Sep 30: Borussia Dortmund v Sevilla; Paris Saint-Germain v Karpaty Lviv. Oct 21: Borussia Dortmund v Paris Saint-Germain; Karpaty Lviv v Sevilla. Nov 4: Paris Saint-Germain v Borussia Dortmund; Sevilla v Karpaty Lviv. Dec 2: Borussia Dortmund v Karpaty Lviv; Paris Saint-Germain v Sevilla. Dec 15: Karpaty Lviv v Paris Saint-Germain; Sevilla v Borussia Dortmund.

worldmags

Dismissed...Anthuenis

BELGIUM

Anthuenis pays the price

Aime Anthuenis was sacked as coach of Lierse following their 2-0 defeat against Westerlo.

Lierse were promoted to the Belgian top flight at the end of last season but are currently joint-bottom of the standings with just one point from a possible 21.

Assistant coaches Eric Van Meir and Chris Janssens have been placed in temporary charge of first-team affairs.

DENMARK

Olsen makes way

OB parted company with their coach, Lars Olsen, after they picked up just 11 points in their opening eight league games.

Olsen, who was captain of Denmark when they won the European Championship in1992, has temporarily been replaced by the club's former coach Uffe Pedersen.

ENGLAND

Berbatov treble

Dimitar Berbatov's hat-trick for Manchester United at home to Liverpool was the first by a United player in this league fixture since Stan Pearson in 1946. Pearson's goals came at Maine Road, where United played from

Red Devil...Berbatov

Group K

Sep 16: Liverpool (Eng) 4 Steaua Bucharest (Rom) 1; Napoli (Ita) 0 Utrecht (Hol) 0.

EUROPA LEAGUE – GROUP K	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Liverpool	1	1	0	0	4	1	3
Napoli	1	0	1	0	0	0	1
Utrecht	1	0	1	0	0	0	1
Steaua	1	0	0	1	1	4	0

Remaining fixtures:
Sep 30: Steaua Bucharest v Napoli; Utrecht v Liverpool. Oct 21: Napoli v Liverpool; Utrecht v Steaua Bucharest. Nov 4: Liverpool v Napoli; Steaua Bucharest v Utrecht. Dec 2: Steaua Bucharest v Liverpool; Utrecht v Napoli. Dec 15: Liverpool v Utrecht; Napoli v Steaua Bucharest.

Group L

Sep 16: Besiktas (Tur) 1 CSKA Sofia (Bul) 0; Porto (Por) 3 Rapid Wien (Aut) 0.

EUROPA LEAGUE – GROUP L	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Porto	1	1	0	0	3	0	3
Besiktas	1	1	0	0	1	0	3
CSKA Sofia	1	0	0	1	0	1	0
Rapid Wien	1	0	0	1	0	3	0

Remaining fixtures:
Sep 30: CSKA Sofia v Porto; Rapid Wien v Besiktas. Oct 21: Besiktas v Porto; CSKA Sofia v Rapid Wien. Nov 4: Porto v Besiktas; Rapid Wien v CSKA Sofia. Dec 2: CSKA Sofia v Besiktas; Rapid Wien v Porto. Dec 15: Besiktas v Rapid Wien; Porto v CSKA Sofia.

Top two in each group qualify for 1st knockout round, in which they will be joined by the eight third-placed teams from the Champions League group stage

AUSTRIA

Aug 28: Ried 1 Kapfenberger 0; Mattersburg 1 Salzburg 0.
Aug 29: LASK 1 Rapid 0; Austria 0 Wacker 3; Sturm 4 Wiener Neustadt 2.
Sep 11: Wacker 1 Ried 0; Salzburg 0 LASK 0; Sturm 2 Mattersburg 0; Wiener Neustadt 3 Kapfenberger 0.
Sep 12: Rapid 0 Austria 1.

AUSTRIA	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Wacker	6	5	1	0	14	2	16
Ried	7	5	0	2	12	5	15
Sturm	6	4	1	1	13	6	13
Austria	7	3	2	2	8	8	11
W Neustadt	7	3	1	3	14	14	10
Rapid	7	3	0	4	7	9	9
Kapfenberger	7	2	2	3	5	8	8
Salzburg	5	1	2	2	5	5	5
LASK	7	1	1	5	4	13	4
Mattersburg	7	1	0	6	3	15	3

36-round season (9x4); bottom team will be relegated

BELGIUM

Regular season

Aug 28: Cercle Brugge 1 Lokeren 1; Mechelen 0 St Truiden 0; Charleroi 2 Eupen 0; Standard 1 Kortrijk 0; Anderlecht 0 Zulte Waregem 0.
Aug 29: Westerlo 1 Club Brugge 2; Genk 4 Lierse 1; Gent 1 Germinal Beerschot 0.
Sep 10: St Truiden 0 Anderlecht 2.
Sep 11: Standard 2 Cercle Brugge 0; Germinal Beerschot 1 Charleroi 0; Zulte Waregem 0 Eupen 0; Kortrijk 1 Mechelen 0; Lierse 2 Gent 2.
Sep 12: Club Brugge 2 Genk 2; Lokeren 3 Westerlo 1.
Sep 17: Mechelen 1 Standard 0.
Sep 18: Genk 3 Lokeren 1; Eupen 0 Germinal Beerschot 1; Westerlo 2 Lierse 0; Cercle Brugge 4 St Truiden 2.
Sep 19: Gent 5 Zulte Waregem 3; Charleroi 0 Club Brugge 5; Anderlecht 3 Kortrijk 0.

BELGIUM – REGULAR	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Genk	7	6	1	0	24	6	19
Anderlecht	7	5	2	0	16	1	17
Mechelen	7	5	1	1	8	3	16
Gent	7	5	1	1	14	11	16
Kortrijk	7	4	1	2	7	6	13
Standard	7	3	2	2	11	7	11
Club Brugge	7	3	1	3	15	10	10
Cercle Brugge	7	2	3	2	9	11	9
Westerlo	7	2	2	3	6	7	8
G Beerschot	7	2	2	3	3	7	8
Z Waregem	7	1	4	2	10	9	7
St Truiden	7	2	1	4	5	12	7
Lokeren	7	1	3	3	9	14	6
Charleroi	7	1	2	4	4	15	5
Lierse	7	0	1	6	5	16	1
Eupen	7	0	1	6	3	14	1

30-round regular season (15x2) – top 6 will enter championship play-offs, 7th to 14th will enter Europa League place play-offs, bottom 2 will enter rel/prom play-offs (1 of them will definitely go down)

BOSNIA-HERZEGOVINA

BOSNIA-HERZEGOVINA	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Borac	7	5	1	1	13	5	16
Sarajevo	7	4	1	2	9	5	13
Olimpik	7	4	1	2	6	4	13
Zvijezda	7	4	1	2	10	9	13
Zeljeznicar	7	4	0	3	16	8	12
Travnik	7	4	0	3	13	7	12
Zrinjski	7	3	1	3	8	7	10
Slavija	7	3	1	3	11	12	10
Velez	7	3	1	3	9	12	10
Siroki Brijeg	7	3	0	4	11	11	9
Rudar	7	2	3	2	6	10	9
Sloboda	7	2	2	3	5	6	8
Leotar	7	2	2	3	4	12	8
Buducnost	7	1	4	2	6	8	7
Celik	7	1	3	3	5	7	6
Drina	7	0	1	6	3	12	1

Standings on September 21
30-round season (15x2); bottom 2 will be relegated

BULGARIA

Aug 23: Minyor 1 Lokomotiv Sofia 3.
Aug 28: Montana 3 Pirin 0; Slavia 2 Lokomotiv Plovdiv 1; Cherno More 0 Chernomorets 1; Lokomotiv Sofia 3 Beroe 0.
Aug 29: Sliven 1 CSKA 3; Lovech 2 Akademik 0.
Aug 30: Vidima-Rakovski 1 Levski 2.
Sep 4: Sliven 0 Beroe 1; Kaliakra 2 Minyor 1.
Sep 11: Pirin 2 Lokomotiv Sofia 1; Beroe 2 Kaliakra 0; Akademik 0 Slavia 4; Vidima-Rakovski 0 Cherno More 1; CSKA 1 Lovech 1.
Sep 12: Lokomotiv Plovdiv 4 Montana 0; Levski 4 Minyor 0.
Sep 13: Chernomorets 0 Sliven 0.
Sep 18: Minyor 2 Beroe 0; Sliven 6 Vidima-Rakovski 1; Montana 2 Akademik 2; Kaliakra 0 Pirin 0; Lovech 0 Chernomorets 0.
Sep 19: Slavia 1 CSKA 0; Lokomotiv Sofia 3 Lokomotiv Plovdiv 0.
Sep 20: Cherno More 2 Levski 3.

BULGARIA	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Levski	7	6	0	1	17	6	18
Lok Sofia	7	5	0	2	16	6	15
Slavia	7	5	0	2	12	5	15
Chernomorets	7	4	3	0	6	2	15
Lovech	7	3	4	0	10	6	13
Beroe	7	4	1	2	8	8	13
Lok Plovdiv	7	3	2	2	11	8	11
Cherno More	7	3	0	4	6	8	9
CSKA	7	2	2	3	8	8	8
Montana	7	2	2	3	9	10	8
Kaliakra	7	2	2	3	3	10	8
Sliven	7	2	1	4	9	8	7
Pirin	7	2	1	4	6	11	7
V-Rakovski	7	1	2	4	7	14	5
Minyor	7	1	0	6	7	16	3
Akademik	7	0	2	5	3	12	2

30-round season (15x2); bottom 2 will be relegated; 3rd bottom will enter rel/prom play-off

CROATIA

Aug 27: Hrvatski Dragovoljac 1 Osijek 1.
Aug 28: Varazdin 1 Karlovac 0; Zadar 2 Zagreb 1; Inter 5 Lokomotiva 0; Sibenik 2 Istra 2; Rijeka 2 Slaven 1.
Aug 29: Dinamo 2 Cibalia 0; Split 1 Hajduk 1.
Sep 10: Lokomotiva 3 Zadar 2; Karlovac 2 Hrvatski Dragovoljac 0; Zagreb 0 Split 2; Osijek 3 Sibenik 1.
Sep 11: Istra 0 Inter 1; Slaven 1 Varazdin 0; Cibalia 4 Rijeka 1; Hajduk 1 Dinamo 1.
Sep 17: Hrvatski Dragovoljac 0 Sibenik 1; Inter 1 Osijek 0; Varazdin 2 Cibalia 1.
Sep 18: Zadar 2 Istra 0; Split 1 Lokomotiva 0; Karlovac 1 Slaven 0.
Sep 19: Dinamo 1 Zagreb 0; Rijeka 0 Hajduk 1.

CROATIA	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Hajduk	8	5	3	0	22	6	18
Dinamo	8	5	2	1	16	7	17
Split	8	5	1	2	12	3	16
Rijeka	8	5	1	2	11	8	16
Varazdin	8	4	2	2	9	9	14
Zagreb	8	4	1	3	9	7	13
Karlovac	8	4	0	4	9	8	12
Slaven	8	4	0	4	6	8	12
Cibalia	8	3	2	3	9	6	11
Lokomotiva	8	3	2	3	7	12	11
Osijek	8	2	4	2	8	9	10
Zadar	8	3	1	4	10	12	10
Inter	8	3	0	5	8	12	9
Sibenik	8	1	3	4	4	9	6
Istra	8	0	2	6	5	17	2
H Dragovoljac	8	0	2	6	4	16	2

30-round season (15x2); bottom 3 will be relegated

CYPRUS

Regular season

Aug 28: Olympiakos 0 AEL 2; APOP 0 ENP 2.
Aug 29: Apollon 4 Doxa 0; Ethnikos 2 AEP 1; Alki 2 Anorthosis 3.
Aug 30: APOEL 1 Ermis 0; AEK 1 Omonia 2.
Sep 11: Omonia 1 Ethnikos 0; ENP 1 APOEL 0; Apollon 1 AEK 2.
Sep 12: Anorthosis 3 APOP 0; AEP 1 Alki 2; Doxa 0 AEL 0.
Sep 13: Ermis 2 Olympiakos 2.
Sep 18: Alki 0 Omonia 4; AEK 2 Doxa 0; Olympiakos 1 ENP 1.
Sep 19: APOEL 2 Anorthosis 1; Ethnikos 0 Apollon 2; APOP 0 AEP 1.
Sep 20: AEL 1 Ermis 2.

CYPRUS	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Omonia	3	3	0	0	7	1	9
ENP	3	2	1	0	4	1	7
Apollon	3	2	0	1	7	2	6
Anorthosis	3	2	0	1	7	4	6
AEK	3	2	0	1	5	3	6
APOEL	3	2	0	1	3	2	6
AEL	3	1	1	1	3	2	4
Ermis	3	1	1	1	4	4	4
AEP	3	1	0	2	3	4	3
Ethnikos	3	1	0	2	2	4	3
Alki	3	1	0	2	4	8	3
Olympiakos	3	0	2	1	3	5	2
Doxa	3	0	1	2	0	6	1
APOP	3	0	0	3	0	6	0

26-round regular season (13x2) – top 4 will enter championship play-offs, 5th to 8th will enter "placement" play-offs, 9th to 12th will enter relegation play-offs (1 of them will be relegated). Bottom 2 (13th & 14th places) will be relegated automatically

CZECH REPUBLIC

Aug 23: Teplice 2 Slavia 1.
Aug 27: Slavia 1 Olomouc 1.
Aug 28: Pribram 1 Hradec Kralove 0; Ostrava 0 Teplice 1.
Aug 29: Jablonec 3 Slovacko 0; Usti nad Labem 1 Bohemians 1905 0; Ceske Budejovice 0 Plzen 3; Mlada Boleslav 3 Liberec 1.
Aug 30: Brno 0 Sparta 5.
Sep 10: Liberec 4 Ostrava 1.
Sep 11: Sparta 1 Jablonec 0; Slovacko 2 Ceske Budejovice 0.
Sep 12: Hradec Kralove 0 Slavia 0; Bohemians 1905 1 Pribram 0; Plzen 7 Usti nad Labem 0; Teplice 1 Brno 2.
Sep 13: Olomouc 0 Mlada Boleslav 0.
Sep 17: Jablonec 1 Plzen 2.
Sep 18: Pribram 0 Slovacko 1; Ostrava 1 Hradec Kralove 0; Olomouc 4 Liberec 0.
Sep 19: Usti nad Labem 1 Ceske Budejovice 1; Brno 1 Bohemians 1905 0; Mlada Boleslav 3 Teplice 3.
Sep 20: Slavia 1 Sparta 2.

CZECH REPUBLIC	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Plzen	9	8	1	0	26	6	25
Olomouc	9	5	4	0	19	5	19
Sparta	9	6	0	3	16	6	18
M Boleslav	9	4	3	2	14	9	15
Slovacko	9	4	1	4	10	11	13
Teplice	9	3	3	3	12	13	12
Jablonec	9	3	2	4	11	11	11
Liberec	9	2	4	3	11	13	10
Slavia	9	2	4	3	10	12	10
Boh'ians 1905	9	2	3	4	8	11	9
C Budejovice	9	1	6	2	6	10	9
H Kralove	9	2	3	4	5	9	9
Pribram	9	2	3	4	3	7	9
Brno	9	3	0	6	9	20	9
Usti	9	2	3	4	6	17	9
Ostrava	9	2	2	5	7	13	8

30-round season (15x2); bottom 2 will be relegated

1946 until 1949 following bomb damage at Old Trafford.

The last United player to score three against Liverpool at Old Trafford was Joe Spence, in a 6-1 win in 1928.

Double...Payet (right)

FRANCE

Les Verts are top

Saint-Etienne led Ligue 1 for the first time in 29 years after they beat Montpellier 3-0.

Dimitri Payet grabbed two of the goals as the victory maintained their unbeaten start to the season and Greens coach Christophe Galtier said after the game: "For us the objective is to get 42 points as quickly as possible and today we already have 13. Things can change very quickly in football.

"Our rivals are not the likes of Lyon, Marseille and Bordeaux...it is the 12 or 13 teams who are just looking for the best finish in order to stay in Ligue 1."

French media claim to have evidence to support rumours that Paris Saint-Germain goalkeeper Apoula Edel is not really who he claims to be.

Edel hit the headlines several months ago when a former coach in Cameroon claimed Edel was in fact Ambroise Beyamena, who was five years older than the 24 that the player claimed to be. Edel has denied all allegations.

Identity crisis...Edel

DENMARK

Aug 23: Midtjylland 4 Nordsjaelland 0.
Aug 28: Esbjerg 2 Silkeborg 1.
Aug 29: Nordsjaelland 0 AaB 0; Lyngby 3 Brondby 3; Randers 0 SonderjyskE 0; Horsens 1 Copenhagen 2.
Aug 30: OB 2 Midtjylland 1.
Sep 11: Copenhagen 2 Silkeborg 2; OB 0 Nordsjaelland 1.
Sep 12: AaB 2 Horsens 3; Esbjerg 2 Lyngby 3; Brondby 3 SonderjyskE 1.
Sep 13: Midtjylland 1 Randers 1.
Sep 18: Randers 2 AaB 3.
Sep 19: Horsens 0 Esbjerg 3; Silkeborg 3 OB 1; SonderjyskE 0 Midtjylland 2; Copenhagen 2 Brondby 0.
Sep 20: Lyngby 2 Nordsjaelland 0.

DENMARK

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Copenhagen	9	7	2	0	20	8	23
Midtjylland	9	6	1	2	17	5	19
Brondby	9	4	3	2	17	13	15
Lyngby	9	4	2	3	15	16	14
OB	9	3	2	4	14	13	11
Randers	9	2	5	2	10	11	11
SonderjyskE	9	3	1	5	10	13	10
Esbjerg	9	3	1	5	11	16	10
Nordsjaelland	9	3	1	5	9	14	10
Horsens	9	3	1	5	7	13	10
AaB	9	2	3	4	11	14	9
Silkeborg	9	1	4	4	11	16	7

33-round season (11x3); bottom 2 will be relegated

ENGLAND

Monday, August 23
Manchester City 3 (Barry 13, Tevez 52, pen 68)
Liverpool 0 Att: 47,087

Saturday, August 28
Blackburn 1 (Diouf 27)
Arsenal 2 (Walcott 20, Arshavin 51) Att: 25,059

Blackpool 2 (Paintsil og 71, Varney 76)
Fulham 2 (Zamora 35, Etuhu 87) Att: 15,529

Chelsea 2 (Malouda 32, Drogba pen 77)
Stoke 0 Att: 40,931

Manchester United 3 (Rooney pen 33, Nani 50, Berbatov 69)
West Ham 0 Att: 75,061

Tottenham 0
Wigan 1 (Rodallega 80) Att: 35,101

Wolverhampton 1 (Ebanks-Blake 43)
Newcastle 1 (Carroll 62) Att: 27,745

Sunday, August 29
Aston Villa 1 (L Young 9)
Everton 0 Att: 34,725

Bolton 2 (K Davies pen 71, Blake 81)
Birmingham 2 (Johnson 4, Gardner 50) Att: 18,139

Liverpool 1 (Fernando Torres 65)
West Bromwich 0 Att: 41,194

Sunderland 1 (Bent pen 90)
Manchester City 0 Att: 38,610

Saturday, September 11
Arsenal 4 (Koscielny 24, Chamakh 58, Song 78, Vela 83)
Bolton 1 (Elmander 44) Att: 59,876

Everton 3 (Pienaar 39, Cahill 90, Arteta 90+2)
Manchester United 3 (Fletcher 43, Vidic 47, Berbatov 66) Att: 36,556

Fulham 2 (Dembele 49, 90)
Wolverhampton 1 (Van Damme 10) Att: 25,280

Manchester City 1 (Vieira 56)
Blackburn 1 (Kalinic 25) Att: 44,246

Newcastle 0
Blackpool 2 (Adam pen 45, Campbell 90) Att: 49,597

West Bromwich 1 (Brunt 41)
Tottenham 1 (Modric 27) Att: 23,642

West Ham 1 (Parker 85)
Chelsea 3 (Essien 2, 83, Kalou 17) Att: 33,014

Wigan 1 (Alcaraz 87)
Sunderland 1 (Gyan 66) Att: 15,844

Sunday, September 12
Birmingham 0
Liverpool 0 Att: 27,333

Monday, September 13
Stoke 2 (Jones 80, Huth 90)
Aston Villa 1 (Downing 35) Att: 25,899

Saturday, September 18
Aston Villa 1 (A Young 13)
Bolton 1 (K Davies 35) Att: 34,655

Blackburn 1 (Samba 30)
Fulham 1 (Dempsey 56) Att: 23,759

Everton 0
Newcastle 1 (Ben Arfa 45) Att: 38,019

Stoke 1 (Jones 48)
West Ham 1 (Parker 32) Att: 27,028

Sunderland 1 (Bent 90)
Arsenal 1 (Fabregas 13) Att: 38,950

Tottenham 3 (Van der Vaart pen 76, Pavlyuchenko 87, Hutton 90)
Wolverhampton 1 (Fletcher 45) Att: 35,940

West Bromwich 3 (Dann og 51, Odemwingie 59, Olsson 69)
Birmingham 1 (Jerome 15) Att: 23,062

Sunday, September 19
Chelsea 4 (Kalou 2, Malouda 12, 41, Drogba 30)
Blackpool 0 Att: 41,761

Manchester United 3 (Berbatov 42, 59, 84)
Liverpool 2 (Gerrard pen 64, 70) Att: 75,213

Wigan 0
Manchester City 2 (Tevez 43, Y Toure 70) Att: 15,525

ENGLAND

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Chelsea	5	5	0	0	21	1	15
Arsenal	5	3	2	0	14	4	11
Man United	5	3	2	0	14	7	11
Man City	5	2	2	1	6	2	8
Tottenham	5	2	2	1	6	4	8
Newcastle	5	2	1	2	8	6	7
Fulham	5	1	4	0	7	6	7
Aston Villa	5	2	1	2	6	9	7
Blackpool	5	2	1	2	8	12	7
West Brom	5	2	1	2	5	9	7
Sunderland	5	1	3	1	5	5	6
Birmingham	5	1	3	1	7	8	6
Bolton	5	1	3	1	7	8	6
Blackburn	5	1	2	2	5	6	5
Wolves	5	1	2	2	6	8	5
Liverpool	5	1	2	2	4	7	5
Stoke	5	1	1	3	5	8	4
Wigan	5	1	1	3	2	13	4
Everton	5	0	2	3	4	7	2
West Ham	5	0	1	4	3	13	1

38-round season (19x2); bottom 3 will be relegated

LEADING GOALSCORERS

6	Dimitar Berbatov (Manchester United)
6	Florent Malouda (Chelsea)
5	Didier Drogba (Chelsea)
4	Andy Carroll (Newcastle)
4	Salomon Kalou (Chelsea)
4	Theo Walcott (Arsenal)

FINLAND

Aug 23: Honka 2 JJK 3; KuPS 1 VPS 2.
Aug 27: JJK 2 Lahti 2.
Aug 28: TPS 3 KuPS 0.
Aug 29: VPS 1 Honka 3; Oulu 1 Inter 0.
Aug 30: MyPa 2 Haka 1; HJK 3 Mariehamn 1; Tampere 1 Jaro 4.
Sep 10: Lahti 0 Tampere 1.
Sep 11: Haka 1 VPS 1.
Sep 12: KuPS 2 MyPa 1; Mariehamn 2 TPS 1; Jaro 1 HJK 1.
Sep 13: Inter 3 JJK 2; Honka 3 Oulu 4.
Sep 18: Oulu 1 Lahti 2; TPS 4 Tampere 3.
Sep 19: JJK 1 Jaro 2; MyPa 1 HJK 1; Honka 2 KuPS 1; VPS 0 Inter 3.
Sep 20: Haka 2 Mariehamn 1.

FINLAND

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
HJK	22	13	6	3	37	14	45
Honka	22	12	4	6	39	27	40
TPS	22	10	6	6	35	25	36
KuPS	22	11	3	8	37	33	36
Jaro	22	10	5	7	36	25	35
Inter	22	9	4	9	29	28	31
Tampere	22	8	4	10	31	39	28
MyPa	22	6	9	7	29	32	27
Haka	22	7	6	9	26	35	27
Oulu	22	7	5	10	27	35	26
VPS	22	7	5	10	22	34	26
Mariehamn	22	6	6	10	32	36	24
JJK	22	7	3	12	28	33	24
Lahti	22	3	10	9	19	31	19

26-round season (13x2); bottom team will be relegated; 2nd bottom will enter rel/prom play-off

FRANCE

Saturday, August 28
Arles-Avignon 0
Rennes 1 (Montano 28) Att: 9,364

Caen 0
Brest 2 (Roux 75, Licka pen 78) Att: 15,490

Lorient 2 (Gameiro pen 8, Kitambala 66)
Lyon 0 Att: 14,800

Nancy 0
Toulouse 2 (Capoue 68, Tabanou 90+3) Att: 14,335

Saint-Etienne 3 (Payet 5, 79, 85)
Lens 1 (Jemaa 90+3) Att: 27,520

Valenciennes 0
Montpellier 1 (Giroud 29) Att: 11,122

Sunday, August 29
Bordeaux 1 (Modeste 88)
Marseille 1 (Gonzalez 12) Att: 32,805

Lille 1 (Hazard 67)
Nice 1 (Fae pen 34) Att: 14,000

Monaco 2 (Niculae 52, Aubameyang 59)
Auxerre 0 Att: 6,677

Sochaux 3 (Maiga 14, Brown 20, Perquis 45+1)
Paris Saint-Germain 1 (Hoarau 50) Att: 12,222

Saturday, September 11
Auxerre 1 (Pedretti 19)
Caen 1 (El Arabi 90+3) Att: 8,955

Lens 1 (Boukari 61)
Lille 4 (Gervinho 23, 87, Frau 79, 81) Att: 36,811

Lyon 1 (Pied 27)
Valenciennes 1 (Bong 69) Att: 37,000

Montpellier 1 (Estrada 50)
Nancy 2 (Bakar 5, Traore 34) Att: 14,427

Paris Saint-Germain 4 (Hoarau 18, Sakho 29, Nene 49, 56)
Arles-Avignon 0 Att: 19,025

Rennes 2 (Theophile-Catherine 5, Mangane 90+3)
Sochaux 1 (Perquis 37) Att: 17,504

Toulouse 0
Saint-Etienne 1 (Batlles 34) Att: 19,336

Sunday, September 12
Brest 0
Lorient 0 Att: 16,046

Marseille 2 (Valbuena 42, Adriano og 80)
Monaco 2 (Niculae 15, Park 79) Att: 49,384

Nice 2 (Mouloungui 35, Bamogo 90+4)
Bordeaux 1 (Modeste pen 90+5) Att: 10,309

Saturday, September 18
Arles-Avignon 0
Marseille 3 (Cheyrou 32, A Ayew 37, 54) Att: 15,003

Lorient 0
Caen 1 (El Arabi 41) Att: 15,524

Monaco 0
Toulouse 0 Att: 6,070

worldmags

Derby winner...Dortmund's Shinji Kagawa (right)

GERMANY

Magath's worst day

Despite signing the likes of Raul, Klaas-Jan Huntelaar and Christoph Metzelder, Schalke are bottom of the league and 12 points off the pace after losing their first four games.

Coach Felix Magath said of the 3-1 defeat at home to Borussia Dortmund in the Westphalian derby: "It was my worst day here at Schalke. I have never had four defeats in a row at the start of a season. I have never seen a team like this.

"The troops are totally insecure. These defeats have left their mark."

Stuttgart kick-started their season by beating Borussia Monchengladbach 7-0. Christian Cross' side had lost their previous three league games and were bottom of the Bundesliga, but a hat-trick from Pavel Pogrebnyak eased their early season fears.

The defeat for Borussia followed on from the previous weekend when they lost 4-0 at home to Eintracht Frankfurt.

HOLLAND

Sno heart attack

Ajax midfielder Evander Sno had to be revived by a defibrillator three times after suffering a heart attack during a reserve-team game at Vitesse Arnhem.

The 23-year-old collapsed 18 minutes after appearing as a half-time substitute and was treated on the pitch for more than 10 minutes before being taken to hospital.

"At first I thought he stumbled, but very quickly everyone realised there was something seriously wrong due to the foam around his mouth," said Ajax reserves'

Nancy 0
Brest 2 (Micola 70, Toure 90+3) Att: 14,159

Saint-Etienne 3 (Payet 21, 66, Riviere 32)
Montpellier 0 Att: 30,406

Sochaux 4 (Brown 45+1, Boudebouz 66, Martin 78, Maiga 89)
Nice 0 Att: 9,744

Valenciennes 1 (Samassa 55)
Lens 1 (Boukari 90) Att: 13,669

Sunday, September 19
Bordeaux 2 (Diarra 60, Jussie 90+2)
Lyon 0 Att: 29,886

Lille 1 (Sow 90)
Auxerre 0 Att: 14,000

Paris Saint-Germain 0
Rennes 0 Att: 28,606

FRANCE

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Saint-Etienne	6	4	1	1	11	6	13
Toulouse	6	4	1	1	8	3	13
Rennes	6	3	3	0	7	2	12
Caen	6	3	2	1	7	6	11
Sochaux	6	3	1	2	12	7	10
Lille	6	2	4	0	7	3	10
Nice	6	2	3	1	6	8	9
Marseille	6	2	2	2	11	8	8
PSG	6	2	2	2	9	6	8
Monaco	6	1	5	0	6	4	8
Brest	6	2	2	2	5	4	8
Montpellier	6	2	2	2	3	5	8
Bordeaux	6	2	1	3	7	7	7
Valenciennes	6	1	4	1	6	6	7
Nancy	6	2	1	3	5	10	7
Lorient	6	1	2	3	5	7	5
Lyon	6	1	2	3	4	8	5
Lens	6	1	2	3	7	12	5
Auxerre	6	0	4	2	5	8	4
Arles-Avignon	6	0	0	6	2	13	0

38-round season (19x2); bottom 3 will be relegated

LEADING GOALSCORERS
6 Dimitri Payet (Saint-Etienne)
4 Youssef El Arabi (Caen)
3 Daniel Braaten (Toulouse)
3 Guillaume Hoarau (Paris Saint-Germain)
3 Nene (Paris Saint-Germain)
3 Daniel Niculae (Monaco)
3 Benoit Pedretti (Auxerre)

GERMANY

Friday, August 27
Kaiserslautern 2 (Ilicevic 36, Lakic 37)
Bayern Munich 0 Att: 49,780

Saturday, August 28
Eintracht Frankfurt 1 (Ochs 37)
Hamburg 3 (Mathijsen 60, Van Nistelrooy 81, Guerrero 89) Att: 51,500

Nurnberg 1 (Schieber 15)
Freiburg 2 (Cisse pen 40, 53) Att: 36,780

Schalke 1 (Jones 82)
Hannover 2 (Rausch 31, Abdellaoue 49) Att: 61,226

St Pauli 0
1899 Hoffenheim 1 (Vorsah 87) Att: 23,794

Werder Bremen 4 (Frings pen 33, Arnautovic 36, 90+1, Hugo Almeida 74)
Koln 2 (Podolski 37, McKenna 90+3) Att: 35,500

Wolfsburg 3 (Dzeko 23, 27, Diego 30)
Mainz 4 (Rasmussen 39, Soto 48, Schurrle 58, Szalai 86) Att: 26,116

Sunday, August 29
Bayer Leverkusen 3 (Derdiyok 24, Vidal pen 58, Kiessling 70)
Monchengladbach 6 (Herrmann 20, 44, Brouwers 40, Arango 56, Idrissou 60, Reus 69) Att: 30,210

Stuttgart 1 (Cacau 69)
Borussia Dortmund 3 (Boulahrouz og 5, Barrios 26, Gotze 37) Att: 40,500

Friday, September 10
1899 Hoffenheim 2 (Vorsah 37, Salihovic 90+3)
Schalke 0 Att: 30,150

Saturday, September 11
Bayern Munich 0
Werder Bremen 0 Att: 69,000

Borussia Dortmund 2 (Sahin 50, Kagawa 67)
Wolfsburg 0 Att: 73,600

Freiburg 2 (Cisse 58, Schuster 71)
Stuttgart 1 (Pogrebnyak 27) Att: 23,000

Hamburg 1 (Mathijsen 61)
Nurnberg 1 (Pinola pen 82) Att: 54,099

Hannover 2 (Ya Konan 20, Abdellaoue 50)
Bayer Leverkusen 2 (Derdiyok 62, Helmes 90) Att: 40,852

Monchengladbach 0
Eintracht Frankfurt 4 (Kohler 24, Gekas 36, 64, Ochs 50) Att: 45,315

Sunday, September 12
Koln 1 (Yalcin 17)
St Pauli 0 Att: 50,000

Mainz 2 (Bungert 71, Schurrle 73)
Kaiserslautern 1 (Lakic 20) Att: 20,300

Friday, September 17
Eintracht Frankfurt 0
Freiburg 1 (Rosenthal 89) Att: 40,600

Saturday, September 18
Bayern Munich 0
Koln 0 Att: 69,000

Kaiserslautern 2 (Hoffer 46, 75)
1899 Hoffenheim 2 (Luiz Gustavo 39, Sigurdsson 77) Att: 44,453

Stuttgart 7 (Pogrebnyak 2, 54, 60, Niedermeier 21, Kuzmanovic 64, Delpierre 72, Marica 80)
Monchengladbach 0 Att: 39,500

Werder Bremen 0
Mainz 2 (Risse 53, Schurrle 61) Att: 34,023

Wolfsburg 2 (Diego 55, Dzeko 67)
Hannover 0 Att: 30,000

Sunday, September 19
Bayer Leverkusen 0
Nurnberg 0 Att: 23,963

Schalke 1 (Huntelaar 89)
Borussia Dortmund 3 (Kagawa 20, 58, Lewandowski 86) Att: 60,069

St Pauli 1 (Boll 77)
Hamburg 1 (Petric 88) Att: 23,794

GERMANY

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Mainz	4	4	0	0	10	4	12
Hoffenheim	4	3	1	0	9	3	10
B Dortmund	4	3	0	1	8	4	9
Freiburg	4	3	0	1	6	5	9
Hamburg	4	2	2	0	7	4	8
Kaiserslautern	4	2	1	1	8	5	7
Hannover	4	2	1	1	6	6	7
B Leverkusen	4	1	2	1	7	8	5
Bayern	4	1	2	1	2	3	5
St Pauli	4	1	1	2	4	4	4
Werder	4	1	1	2	5	8	4
Koln	4	1	1	2	4	7	4
M'gladbach	4	1	1	2	7	15	4
Stuttgart	4	1	0	3	9	7	3
E Frankfurt	4	1	0	3	6	6	3
Nurnberg	4	0	3	1	3	4	3
Wolfsburg	4	1	0	3	6	8	3
Schalke	4	0	0	4	3	9	0

34-round season (17x2); bottom 2 will be relegated; 3rd bottom will enter rel/prom play-off

LEADING GOALSCORERS
4 Papiss Demba Cisse (Freiburg)
4 Edin Dzeko (Wolfsburg)
4 Srdjan Lakic (Kaiserslautern)
4 Pavel Pogrebnyak (Stuttgart)
3 Shinji Kagawa (Borussia Dortmund)
3 Andre Schurrle (Mainz)
3 Ruud Van Nistelrooy (Hamburg)

GREECE

Aug 27: Panathinaikos 1 Xanthi 1.
Aug 28: Panionios 0 Volos 1; Larissa 1 Atromitos 0; Iraklis 2 Olympiakos 1.
Aug 29: Ergotelis 0 Asteras 1; PAOK 3 Panserraikos 2; Kerkyra 2 AEK 1; Kavala 0 Aris 1.
Sep 11: Atromitos 1 Iraklis 1; Olympiakos 2 Kerkyra 0; Asteras 0 PAOK 0; Aris 0 Panathinaikos 1.
Sep 12: Xanthi 1 Panionios 1; Volos 0 Ergotelis 1; Larissa 0 Kavala 0; AEK 2 Panserraikos 0.
Sep 18: Iraklis 1 Larissa 0; Ergotelis 1 Xanthi 0; Kavala 2 Panathinaikos 2.
Sep 19: Kerkyra 3 Atromitos 1; PAOK 1 Volos 1; Panionios 1 Aris 0; Panserraikos 0 Olympiakos 1; AEK 2 Asteras 2.

GREECE

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Iraklis	3	2	1	0	4	2	7
Olympiakos	3	2	0	1	4	2	6
Kerkyra	3	2	0	1	5	4	6
Ergotelis	3	2	0	1	2	1	6
Panathinaikos	3	1	2	0	4	3	5
PAOK	3	1	2	0	4	3	5
Asteras	3	1	2	0	3	2	5
AEK	3	1	1	1	5	4	4
Panionios	3	1	1	1	2	2	4
Volos	3	1	1	1	2	2	4
Larissa	3	1	1	1	1	1	4
Aris	3	1	0	2	1	2	3
Kavala	3	0	2	1	2	3	2
Xanthi	3	0	2	1	2	3	2
Atromitos	3	0	1	2	2	5	1
Panserraikos	3	0	0	3	2	6	0

30-round season (15x2); bottom 3 will be relegated. Teams finishing 2nd to 5th will enter play-offs for Greece's 2nd Champions League place

HOLLAND

Aug 27: Willem II 0 Groningen 3.
Aug 28: Roda JC 4 Heracles 2; NAC 2 VVV 0; NEC 2 Heerenveen 2.
Aug 29: De Graafschap 0 Ajax 5; Den Haag 2 PSV 2; Twente 4 Utrecht 0; Feyenoord 4 Vitesse 0; AZ 1 Excelsior 1.
Sep 11: VVV 1 Twente 2; Ajax 2 Willem II 0; PSV 3 NEC 1; Heerenveen 2 Vitesse 1; Excelsior 2 Heracles 1; AZ 1 Roda JC 2.
Sep 12: NAC 2 Feyenoord 0; Den Haag 2 De Graafschap 2; Groningen 1 Utrecht 0.
Sep 17: De Graafschap 3 Heerenveen 2.
Sep 18: Groningen 2 Excelsior 0; Vitesse 0 NAC 0; Willem II 2 Den Haag 4.
Sep 19: Feyenoord 1 Ajax 2; NEC 0 AZ 1; Roda JC 0 PSV 0; Utrecht 3 VVV 2; Heracles 0 Twente 0.

HOLLAND

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Ajax	6	5	1	0	18	5	16
PSV	6	4	2	0	17	5	14
Groningen	6	4	2	0	11	4	14
Twente	6	3	3	0	9	1	12
Roda JC	6	3	2	1	9	7	11
Excelsior	6	3	1	2	10	11	10
Utrecht	6	3	0	3	10	11	9
Heerenveen	6	2	2	2	10	10	8
Den Haag	6	2	2	2	13	14	8
Feyenoord	6	2	1	3	11	9	7
NAC*	6	2	2	2	7	7	7
NEC	6	2	1	3	11	13	7
De Graafschap	6	2	1	3	9	17	7
AZ	6	1	3	2	6	8	6
Heracles	6	1	2	3	7	8	5
Vitesse	6	1	1	4	6	14	4
VVV	6	1	0	5	6	11	3
Willem II	6	0	0	6	5	20	0

34-round season (17x2); bottom team will be relegated; 2nd & 3rd bottom will enter rel/prom play-offs
**1pt deducted for financial mismanagement*

HUNGARY

HUNGARY

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
MTK	7	4	2	1	12	7	14
Kaposvar	7	4	1	2	13	9	13
Honved	7	4	1	2	11	7	13
Fehervar	6	3	2	1	12	6	11
Debrecen	7	3	2	2	14	10	11
Gyor	7	3	2	2	9	6	11
Ujpest	7	2	4	1	11	5	10
Vasas	7	3	1	3	11	15	10
Ferencvaros	7	3	1	3	10	14	10
Zalaegerszeg	6	2	2	2	10	10	8
Paks	6	2	2	2	10	11	8
Papa	6	2	1	3	12	10	7
Siofok	7	1	4	2	4	7	7
Szolnoki	7	1	2	4	6	13	5
Szombathely	6	0	3	3	3	9	3
Kecskemet	6	1	0	5	11	20	3

Standings on September 21
30-round season (15x2); bottom 2 will be relegated

ISRAEL

Regular season
Aug 23: Maccabi Petah Tikva 0 Be'er Sheva 1.
Aug 28: Be'er Sheva 0 Bnei Yehuda 1; Maccabi Haifa 1 Maccabi Petah Tikva 0; Hapoel Petah Tikva 2 Acre 2; Ashdod 2 Kiryat Shmona 2; Hapoel Tel Aviv 5 Ashkelon 1; Ramat Gan 1 Hapoel Haifa 2; Bnei Sakhnin 1 Netanya 1.
Aug 29: Beitar 0 Maccabi Tel Aviv 1.

Quit...Gershon

assistant coach, Albert Van der Dussen. "Fortunately our doctor and physio were there quickly. They performed a heroic act and saved his life. They gave him the defibrillator three times. We feared for his life, he was very lucky."

ISRAEL

All over for Gershon

Beitar Jerusalem defender Shimon Gershon has had to retire from the game after being diagnosed with a heart condition.

"I wanted to carry on playing but the doctors told me that if I continue in competitive sport I will be putting myself in danger," said the 32-year-old who has won 50 caps for his country. "I can't really believe that it is all over but I'm hoping this will be for the best."

He retires as one of Israel's most successful players, with three Premier League titles and five State Cups.

POLAND

Bakero replaced

Former national coach Pawel Janas replaced Jose Bakero as coach of Polonia Warsaw after the Spaniard left the club following a 3-1 defeat away to Korona Kielce that saw his side knocked off the top of the table.

New boss...Janas

Sep 11: Ashkelon 1 Ramat Gan 1; Acre 2 Hapoel Tel Aviv 2; Kiryat Shmona 3 Hapoel Petah Tikva 1; Netanya 2 Ashdod 0; Maccabi Petah Tikva 2 Beitar 1; Maccabi Tel Aviv 4 Bnei Sakhnin 0.
Sep 12: Hapoel Haifa 2 Bnei Yehuda 0.
Sep 13: Be'er Sheva 1 Maccabi Haifa 1.

ISRAEL – REGULAR

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
H Haifa	3	3	0	0	5	1	9
Netanya	3	2	1	0	7	2	7
Kiryat Shmona	3	2	1	0	7	3	7
M Haifa	3	2	1	0	3	1	7
M Tel Aviv	3	2	0	1	5	1	6
H Tel Aviv	3	1	1	1	7	4	4
Be'er Sheva	3	1	1	1	2	2	4
Ashdod	3	1	1	1	4	5	4
Bnei Yehuda	3	1	1	1	1	2	4
Ashkelon	3	1	1	1	5	7	4
M Petah Tikva	3	1	0	2	2	3	3
Acre	3	0	2	1	5	6	2
H Petah Tikva	3	0	1	2	4	8	1
Bnei Sakhnin	3	0	1	2	1	7	1
Beitar	3	0	0	3	2	7	0
Ramat Gan*	3	0	2	1	2	3	-2

30-round regular season (15x2) – top 6 will enter championship play-offs, 7th to 10th will enter "placement" play-offs, bottom 6 will enter relegation play-offs (2 teams will go down)
**4pts deducted for contract irregularities*

ITALY

Saturday, August 28
Roma 0
Cesena 0 Att: 36,000

Udinese 0
Genoa 1 (Mesto 81) Att: 14,000

Sunday, August 29
Bari 1 (Donati 43)
Juventus 0 Att: 45,162

Chievo 2 (Moscardelli 14, Pellissier pen 83)
Catania 1 (Ricchiuti 22) Att: 7,329

Fiorentina 1 (D'Agostino 49)
Napoli 1 (Cavani 7) Att: 25,025

Milan 4 (Alexandre Pato 16, 28, Thiago Silva 23, Inzaghi 90)
Lecce 0 Att: 37,177

Palermo 0
Cagliari 0 Att: 28,612

Parma 2 (Bozhinov 14, Morrone 45+1)
Brescia 0 Att: 12,630

Sampdoria 2 (Cassano pen 60, Guberti 71)
Lazio 0 Att: 21,504

Monday, August 30
Bologna 0
Internazionale 0 Att: 29,000

Saturday, September 11
Cagliari 5 (Conti 8, Matri pen 23, 47, Acquafresca 38, Lazzari 88)
Roma 1 (De Rossi 18) Att: 16,000

Cesena 2 (Bogdani 31, Giaccherini 44)
Milan 0 Att: 23,000

Internazionale 2 (Lucio 7, Eto'o 67)
Udinese 1 (Floro Flores 31) Att: 50,000

Sunday, September 12
Brescia 3 (Dallamano 3, Eder 28, Caracciolo pen 43)
Palermo 2 (Pastore 22, Balzaretti 83) Att: 27,000

Catania 2 (Mascara pen 12, Antenucci pen 82)
Parma 1 (Giovinco 90+1) Att: 11,000

Genoa 1 (Destro 6)
Chievo 3 (Moscardelli 45, Marcolini 56, Pellissier 74) Att: 22,940

Juventus 3 (Marchisio 43, Pepe 50, Quagliarella 67)
Sampdoria 3 (Pozzi 36, 73, Cassano 64) Att: 23,949

Lazio 3 (Mauri 68, Rocchi 75, Hernanes pen 90+4)
Bologna 1 (Mudingayi 78) Att: 20,000

Lecce 1 (Di Michele 9)
Fiorentina 0 Att: 9,000

Napoli 2 (Cavani 30, Cannavaro 86)
Bari 2 (Barreto 12, Castillo 88) Att: 22,000

Saturday, September 18
Fiorentina 1 (Ljajic pen 19)
Lazio 2 (Ledesma 32, Kozak 67) Att: 20,868

Milan 1 (Inzaghi 45)
Catania 1 (Capuano 27) Att: 42,640

Sunday, September 19
Bari 0
Cagliari 0 Att: 18,000

Cesena 1 (Bogdani 54)
Lecce 0 Att: 14,277

Chievo 0
Brescia 1 (Diamanti 30) Att: 9,370

Palermo 1 (Ilicic 28)
Internazionale 2 (Eto'o 62, 70) Att: 30,000

Parma 1 (Zaccardo 72)
Genoa 1 (Toni pen 28) Att: 18,756

Roma 2 (Borriello 7, Rubin og 59)
Bologna 2 (Di Vaio 77, 90) Att: 30,000

Sampdoria 1 (Cassano pen 78)
Napoli 2 (Hamsik 83, Cavani 86) Att: 22,356

Udinese 0
Juventus 4 (Coda og 18, Quagliarella 24, Marchisio 43, Iaquinta 77) Att: 15,000

ITALY

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Cesena	3	2	1	0	3	0	7
Inter	3	2	1	0	4	2	7
Chievo	3	2	0	1	5	3	6
Lazio	3	2	0	1	5	4	6
Brescia	3	2	0	1	4	4	6
Cagliari	3	1	2	0	5	1	5
Napoli	3	1	2	0	5	4	5
Bari	3	1	2	0	3	2	5
Juventus	3	1	1	1	7	4	4
Milan	3	1	1	1	5	3	4
Sampdoria	3	1	1	1	6	5	4
Parma	3	1	1	1	4	3	4
Catania	3	1	1	1	4	4	4
Genoa	3	1	1	1	3	4	4
Lecce	3	1	0	2	1	5	3
Bologna	3	0	2	1	3	5	2
Roma	3	0	2	1	3	7	2
Palermo	3	0	1	2	3	5	1
Fiorentina	3	0	1	2	2	4	1
Udinese	3	0	0	3	1	7	0

38-round season (19x2); bottom 3 will be relegated

LEADING GOALSCORERS
3 Antonio Cassano (Sampdoria)
3 Edinson Cavani (Napoli)
3 Samuel Eto'o (Internazionale)

NORWAY

Aug 23: Valerenga 3 Sandefjord 0.
Aug 28: Haugesund 0 Tromso 0.
Aug 29: Molde 0 Valerenga 1; Aalesund 1 Honefoss 3; Odd Grenland 0 Kongsvinger 0; Stabaek 2 Lillestrom 1; Sandefjord 0 Stromsgodset 3; Start 2 Rosenborg 3.
Aug 30: Brann 3 Viking 3.
Sep 11: Tromso 0 Brann 3.
Sep 12: Lillestrom 3 Start 2; Rosenborg 1 Viking 1; Honefoss 0 Haugesund 2; Kongsvinger 1 Sandefjord 0; Odd Grenland 2 Aalesund 1; Valerenga 3 Stabaek 2.
Sep 13: Stromsgodset 1 Molde 3.
Sep 18: Viking 3 Valerenga 4.
Sep 19: Sandefjord 3 Tromso 5; Start 4 Stromsgodset 2; Stabaek 0 Odd Grenland 3; Molde 1 Honefoss 0; Aalesund 2 Kongsvinger 0; Brann 2 Rosenborg 3.
Sep 20: Haugesund 3 Lillestrom 3.

NORWAY

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Rosenborg	24	16	8	0	49	20	56
Valerenga	24	15	4	5	57	28	49
Tromso	24	12	7	5	32	23	43
Aalesund	24	11	3	10	33	28	36
Stromsgodset	24	11	3	10	38	44	36
Haugesund	24	9	8	7	40	31	35
Odd Grenland	24	9	8	7	38	35	35
Start	24	10	5	9	46	49	35
Viking	24	8	10	6	39	32	34
Lillestrom	24	7	11	6	40	33	32
Stabaek	24	8	6	10	37	38	30
Brann	24	6	9	9	38	39	27
Molde	24	6	8	10	35	43	26
Honefoss	24	6	5	13	21	46	23
Kongsvinger	24	4	6	14	21	45	18
Sandefjord	24	1	5	18	16	46	8

30-round season (15x2); bottom 2 will be relegated; 3rd bottom will enter rel/prom play-offs

POLAND

Aug 27: Korona 1 Cracovia 0; Legia 0 Belchatow 2.
Aug 28: Wisla 2 Polonia Bytom 1; Lechia 2 Slask 0; Widzew 0 Polonia Warsaw 0; Zaglebie 1 Arka 0.
Aug 29: Jagiellonia 2 Lech 0; Gornik 1 Ruch 0.
Sep 10: Polonia Bytom 2 Zaglebie 0; Jagiellonia 2 Wisla 1.
Sep 11: Cracovia 2 Gornik 3; Belchatow 1 Lechia 0; Slask 1 Lech 2; Arka 1 Widzew 1.
Sep 12: Ruch 1 Legia 0; Polonia Warsaw 1 Korona 3.
Sep 17: Wisla 2 Korona 2; Lechia 1 Cracovia 0.
Sep 18: Gornik 1 Belchatow 0; Widzew 5 Slask 2; Zaglebie 2 Legia 1; Polonia Bytom 1 Ruch 0.
Sep 19: Arka 1 Jagiellonia 0.

POLAND

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Jagiellonia	6	4	1	1	9	4	13
Belchatow	6	4	0	2	9	6	12
Gornik	6	4	0	2	7	7	12
Korona	6	3	2	1	9	6	11
Polonia W	5	3	1	1	8	4	10
Wisla	6	3	1	2	7	7	10
Widzew	6	2	3	1	9	6	9
Lech	5	2	2	1	8	4	8
Lechia	6	2	2	2	5	4	8
Arka	6	2	2	2	4	3	8
Ruch	6	2	1	3	5	5	7
Polonia B	6	2	1	3	5	6	7
Zaglebie	6	2	1	3	6	8	7
Legia	6	2	0	4	4	9	6
Slask	6	1	1	4	6	12	4
Cracovia	6	0	0	6	5	15	0

30-round season (15x2); bottom 2 will be relegated

PORTUGAL

Aug 23: Guimaraes 0 Rio Ave 0.
Aug 28: Nacional 1 Guimaraes 3; Benfica 3 Setubal 0.
Aug 29: Pacos Ferreira 2 Portimonense 2; Beira Mar 2 Academica 1; Braga 1 Maritimo 0; Olhanense 1 Uniao Leiria 0; Rio Ave 0 Porto 2.
Aug 30: Naval 1 Sporting 3.
Sep 10: Guimaraes 2 Benfica 1.
Sep 11: Sporting 0 Olhanense 0; Porto 3 Braga 2.
Sep 12: Maritimo 1 Pacos Ferreira 1; Portimonense 3 Rio Ave 1; Uniao Leiria 2 Nacional 1; Academica 3 Naval 0.
Sep 13: Setubal 0 Beira Mar 0.
Sep 17: Olhanense 2 Portimonense 0.
Sep 18: Beira Mar 1 Maritimo 1; Guimaraes 1 Uniao Leiria 0.
Sep 19: Rio Ave 2 Academica 2; Naval 0 Setubal 0; Pacos Ferreira 2 Braga 2; Benfica 2 Sporting 0.
Sep 20: Nacional 0 Porto 2.

PORTUGAL

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Porto	5	5	0	0	11	2	15
Guimaraes	5	3	2	0	6	2	11
Olhanense	5	2	3	0	4	1	9
Academica	5	2	2	1	9	6	8
Braga	5	2	2	1	8	6	8
P Ferreira	5	1	4	0	6	5	7
Sporting	5	2	1	2	4	4	7
Benfica	5	2	0	3	8	6	6
Beira Mar	5	1	3	1	3	5	6
Setubal	5	1	3	1	1	3	6
Nacional	5	2	0	3	5	8	6
Uniao Leiria	5	1	2	2	2	3	5
Portimonense	5	1	1	3	6	9	4
Naval	5	1	1	3	2	7	4
Maritimo	5	0	2	3	2	5	2
Rio Ave	5	0	2	3	3	8	2

30-round season (15x2); bottom 2 will be relegated

worldmags

Cluj appointment...Cartu

ROMANIA

Cluj make poor start

Last season's double winners CFR Cluj sacked coach Andrea Mandorlini and replaced him with Sorin Cartu after a 2-0 defeat at Rapid Bucharest left the club in 11th place after seven matches.

Cartu, who won seven caps for Romania and made more than 300 appearances for Universitatea Craiova, had three spells coaching his former club and led them to the double in 1991.

Former Tottenham Hotspur and West Ham United forward Ilie Dumitrescu resigned as coach of Steaua Bucharest after the 1-1 draw at home to Astra Ploiesti.

RUSSIA

New calender

Russian Football Union chief Sergey Fursenko says Russia will adopt the same league format as the other major European leagues with a switch to an autumn-to-spring calendar. Next year's Russian Premier League will be a transitional championship that finishes in the spring of 2012.

SPAIN

Iberian idea

Former Barcelona president

New plans...Laporta (left) with Barcelona coach Pep Guardiola

REPUBLIC OF IRELAND

Aug 23: Fingal 2 St Patrick's 3; Drogheda 0 Bohemians 1; Shamrock 4 UCD 1.
Sep 3: Galway 1 St Patrick's 1; Dundalk 0 Bray 2; UCD 1 Drogheda 1; Fingal 0 Bohemians 0; Shamrock 1 Sligo 0.
Sep 10: St Patrick's 1 Shamrock 3; Bohemians 3 UCD 1; Bray 4 Galway 0; Drogheda 1 Dundalk 3; Sligo 4 Fingal 3.
Sep 13: Bohemians 2 Drogheda 0; Dundalk 5 Shamrock 1; Galway 2 Sligo 2; Fingal 2 Bray 2; UCD 3 St Patrick's 2.

REPUBLIC OF IRELAND	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Shamrock	30	17	9	4	47	26	60
Bohemians	30	16	8	6	42	24	56
St Patrick's	30	14	8	8	47	27	50
Sligo	30	12	11	7	49	30	47
Fingal	30	11	13	6	43	33	46
Dundalk	29	11	6	12	36	38	39
UCD	30	9	7	14	36	41	34
Galway	30	8	10	12	30	41	34
Bray	29	5	5	19	27	63	20
Drogheda	30	4	7	19	25	59	19

36-round season (9x4); bottom team will be relegated; 2nd & 3rd bottom will enter rel/prom play-offs

ROMANIA

Aug 23: Brasov 1 Urziceni 1.
Aug 27: Gaz Metan 0 Rapid 1; Dinamo 3 Univ Cluj 4.
Aug 28: Univ Craiova 1 Sportul 0; CFR 2 Pandurii 1.
Aug 29: Otelul 1 Brasov 0; Steaua 1 Timisoara 1; Urziceni 2 Vaslui 1.
Aug 30: Gloria 3 Tirgu-Mures 1; Victoria 1 Astra 1.
Sep 10: Univ Cluj 2 Gloria 1; Rapid 2 CFR 0.
Sep 11: Sportul 2 Victoria 2; Urziceni 1 Steaua 0.
Sep 12: Tirgu-Mures 1 Gaz Metan 0; Astra 1 Timisoara 1; Brasov 2 Dinamo 2.
Sep 13: Vaslui 4 Otelul 0; Pandurii 3 Univ Craiova 1.
Sep 17: Gaz Metan 3 Univ Cluj 1; Victoria 2 Pandurii 0; Univ Craiova 1 Rapid 1.
Sep 18: Otelul 4 Urziceni 1; Timisoara 2 Sportul 1.
Sep 19: CFR 1 Tirgu-Mures 2; Dinamo 1 Vaslui 2.
Sep 20: Gloria 0 Brasov 0; Steaua 1 Astra 1.

ROMANIA	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Otelul	8	5	1	2	10	7	16
Rapid	8	4	3	1	10	4	15
Steaua	8	4	3	1	12	7	15
Dinamo	8	4	2	2	24	18	14
Gaz Metan	8	4	2	2	13	7	14
Timisoara	8	3	5	0	14	11	14
Univ Cluj	8	4	1	3	13	14	13
Vaslui	8	3	2	3	11	11	11
Brasov	8	2	4	2	9	8	10
Tirgu-Mures	8	3	1	4	8	13	10
Gloria	8	2	3	3	12	12	9
Urziceni	8	2	3	3	5	8	9
Victoria	8	2	2	4	10	12	8
CFR	8	2	2	4	9	13	8
Sportul	8	2	1	5	13	16	7
Univ Craiova	8	1	4	3	7	10	7
Astra	8	0	6	2	9	12	6
Pandurii	8	1	3	4	6	12	6

34-round season (17x2); bottom 4 will be relegated

RUSSIA

Aug 28: Terek 2 Spartak Moscow 0; Amkar 1 Rostov 0; Saturn 1 Krylia Sovetov 1; Spartak Nalchik 1 Rubin 1.
Aug 29: Tom 1 Dynamo 0; Lokomotiv 0 Zenit 3; CSKA 2 Alania 1.
Aug 30: Anzhi 1 Sibir 0.
Sep 11: Sibir 1 Alania 2; Zenit 2 Tom 0; Spartak Moscow 2 Saturn 1; Rubin 3 Amkar 0.
Sep 12: Lokomotiv 1 CSKA 0; Krylia Sovetov 2 Spartak Nalchik 0; Dynamo 3 Terek 1; Rostov 1 Anzhi 0.
Sep 18: Amkar 2 Krylia Sovetov 1; Alania 0 Rostov 0; Saturn 3 Dynamo 2.
Sep 19: Tom 1 Lokomotiv 1; Anzhi 0 Rubin 1.
Sep 20: Terek 0 Zenit 0; Spartak Nalchik 0 Spartak Moscow 2; CSKA 1 Sibir 0.

RUSSIA	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Zenit	19	14	5	0	31	7	47
Rubin	21	12	7	2	25	8	43
CSKA	19	12	3	4	31	15	39
Spartak N	21	9	6	6	27	24	33
Rostov	21	10	3	8	21	24	33
Spartak M	20	9	5	6	31	25	32
Terek	21	7	7	7	22	19	28
Lokomotiv	21	7	6	8	24	25	27
Dynamo	20	6	8	6	25	22	26
Tom	21	7	5	9	26	32	26
Saturn	21	6	6	9	17	22	24
Anzhi	21	6	5	10	18	23	23
Alania	21	6	5	10	19	28	23
Amkar	21	6	3	12	14	24	21
Krylia Sovetov	21	3	7	11	15	30	16
Sibir	21	3	3	15	25	43	12

30-round season (15x2); bottom 2 will be relegated

SCOTLAND

Regular season

Aug 28: Rangers 2 St Johnstone 1; Inverness 0 Hamilton 1; Aberdeen 0 Kilmarnock 1.
Aug 29: Motherwell 0 Celtic 1; St Mirren 1 Hibernian 0; Hearts 1 Dundee United 1.
Sep 11: Hamilton 1 Rangers 2; Celtic 3 Hearts 0; Dundee United 3 Aberdeen 1; Hibernian 1 Inverness 1; Kilmarnock 2 St Mirren 1; St Johnstone 0 Motherwell 2.
Sep 18: Inverness 1 Hearts 3; Hibernian 1 Hamilton 1; Motherwell 1 Aberdeen 1; Rangers 4 Dundee United 0; St Johnstone 2 St Mirren 1.
Sep 19: Kilmarnock 1 Celtic 2.

SCOTLAND – REGULAR	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Rangers	5	5	0	0	13	3	15
Celtic	5	5	0	0	11	1	15
Hearts	5	2	2	1	9	6	8
Aberdeen	5	2	1	2	7	5	7
Motherwell	5	2	1	2	6	5	7
Kilmarnock	5	2	0	3	5	6	6
Hibernian	5	1	2	2	5	8	5
Dundee Utd	5	1	2	2	5	11	5
Inverness	5	1	1	3	6	6	4
St Johnstone	5	1	1	3	4	7	4
St Mirren	5	1	1	3	4	9	4
Hamilton	5	1	1	3	3	11	4

33-round regular season (11x3) – top 6 will form championship group, bottom 6 will form relegation group (1 will be relegated)

SERBIA

Aug 28: Rad 0 Sloboda Sevojno 0; Borac 1 Metalac 0; Spartak 2 Cukaricki 0; Smederevo 1 BSK 1; Vojvodina 2 Javor 0.
Aug 29: Hajduk 1 Indjija 3; OFK 0 Partizan 2; Red Star 2 Jagodina 1.
Sep 4: Partizan 2 Hajduk 0.
Sep 11: Metalac 0 Spartak 1; Sloboda Sevojno 0 Borac 0; Cukaricki 0 Vojvodina 2; Javor 0 Smederevo 0; Indjija 2 Jagodina 0; Partizan 3 Rad 0.
Sep 12: Hajduk 1 OFK 2; BSK 1 Red Star 3.
Sep 18: Jagodina 2 BSK 0; Red Star 1 Javor 0; Smederevo 2 Cukaricki 0; Vojvodina 1 Metalac 1; OFK 2 Indjija 1.
Sep 19: Spartak 2 Sloboda Sevojno 2; Borac 0 Partizan 2; Rad 1 Hajduk 0.

SERBIA	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Partizan	5	5	0	0	11	1	15
Red Star	5	4	1	0	7	2	13
Vojvodina	5	3	2	0	7	1	11
Spartak	5	2	3	0	6	3	9
S Sevojno	5	2	3	0	5	3	9
OFK	5	3	0	2	5	5	9
Rad	5	2	2	1	5	3	8
Borac	5	2	2	1	3	3	8
Jagodina	5	2	1	2	4	4	7
Indjija	5	2	0	3	7	6	6
Smederevo	5	1	3	1	3	2	6
Javor	5	0	3	2	1	4	3
Metalac	5	0	2	3	1	4	2
BSK	5	0	2	3	3	9	2
Hajduk	5	0	0	5	3	10	0
Cukaricki	5	0	0	5	0	11	0

30-round season (15x2); bottom 2 will be relegated

SLOVAKIA

Aug 28: Dubnica 2 DAC 1; Tatran 1 Kosice 1; Spartak 0 Zilina 0; Ruzomberok 1 Dukla 0; Nitra 1 Zlate Moravce 1.
Aug 29: Senica 3 Slovan 2.
Sep 11: Zlate Moravce 1 DAC 1; Kosice 1 Dubnica 0; Zilina 2 Tatran 1; Dukla 1 Senica 0; Nitra 1 Ruzomberok 2.
Sep 12: Slovan 1 Spartak 1.
Sep 17: Senica 2 Nitra 0.
Sep 18: Ruzomberok 1 Zlate Moravce 1; Tatran 2 Slovan 1; Spartak 1 Dukla 1; Dubnica 2 Zilina 5; DAC 1 Kosice 0.

SLOVAKIA	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Zilina	9	5	4	0	19	9	19
Senica	9	6	1	2	11	8	19
Ruzomberok	9	5	2	2	9	7	17
Spartak	9	4	4	1	13	5	16
Slovan	9	4	2	3	16	9	14
Zlate Moravce	9	3	4	2	9	9	13
Dukla	9	3	3	3	8	7	12
Nitra	9	3	2	4	9	15	11
DAC	9	2	2	5	8	13	8
Dubnica	9	2	1	6	9	18	7
Kosice	9	1	3	5	4	10	6
Tatran	9	1	2	6	6	11	5

33-round season (11x3); bottom team will be relegated

SLOVENIA

Aug 28: Celje 2 Nafta 4; Domzale 1 Gorica 0.
Aug 29: Triglav 1 Rudar 0; Primorje 5 Olimpija 1; Koper 0 Maribor 1.
Sep 10: Nafta 3 Rudar 3; Olimpija 0 Domzale 1.
Sep 11: Gorica 2 Triglav 1; Maribor 1 Primorje 1; Celje 2 Koper 1.
Sep 18: Koper 0 Nafta 3; Rudar 1 Gorica 2.
Sep 19: Triglav 0 Olimpija 5.

SLOVENIA	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Domzale	8	6	1	1	11	3	19
Nafta	9	6	1	2	19	13	19
Maribor	7	5	2	0	15	3	17
Gorica	9	4	2	3	14	14	14
Koper	9	3	1	5	10	13	10
Celje	8	2	3	3	14	14	9
Rudar	9	2	3	4	11	15	9
Triglav	9	2	2	5	8	21	8
Primorje	8	1	3	4	13	15	6
Olimpija	8	1	2	5	11	15	5

36-round season (9x4); bottom team will be relegated; 2nd bottom will enter rel/prom play-off

SPAIN

Saturday, August 28

Hercules 0
Athletic Bilbao 1 (Llorente 46) Att: 24,000

Levante 1 (Ruben Suarez pen 10)
Sevilla 4 (Konko 12, 62, Negredo pen 28, Renato 88) Att: 10,241

Malaga 1 (Fernandez 45)
Valencia 3 (Aduriz 9, Joaquin 70, 74) Att: 30,000

Sunday, August 29

Deportivo La Coruna 0
Zaragoza 0 Att: 15,000

Espanyol 3 (Osvaldo 34, 55, Datolo 90+3)
Getafe 1 (Galan og 62) Att: 23,421

Mallorca 0
Real Madrid 0 Att: 23,000

Osasuna 0
Almeria 0 Att: 14,147

Racing Santander 0
Barcelona 3 (Messi 3, Iniesta 33, Villa 62) Att: 19,095

Real Sociedad 1 (Xabi Prieto 57)
Villarreal 0 Att: 25,000

Monday, August 30

Atletico Madrid 4 (Jurado 11, Forlan 39, 63, Simao 90+2)
Sporting Gijon 0 Att: 50,000

Saturday, September 11

Athletic Bilbao 1 (Llorente 88)
Atletico Madrid 2 (Forlan 11, Tiago 80) Att: 40,000

Barcelona 0
Hercules 2 (Valdez 27, 59) Att: 79,300

Real Madrid 1 (Ricardo Carvalho 48)
Osasuna 0 Att: 68,000

Valencia 1 (Maduro 45)
Racing Santander 0 Att: 45,000

Sunday, September 12

Getafe 4 (Gavilan 5, 90, Colunga 11, Arizmendi 90+2)
Levante 1 (Rafa Jorda 14) Att: 10,000

Sevilla 0
Deportivo La Coruna 0 Att: 40,000

Joan Laporta, who is now involved in politics, has proposed a pan-Iberian league in which Spanish, Catalan and Portuguese clubs would compete against one another.

Clash...Affolter (left) and Dudar

SWITZERLAND

Dudar in a coma

Young Boys defender Emiliano Dudar suffered head injuries in a collision with team-mate Francois Affolter during the league encounter with Basle.

He was treated on the pitch before being rushed to hospital with concussion. He slipped into a coma before regaining consciousness.

TURKEY

Coach stabbed

The second division match between Samsunspor and Mersin Idmanyurdu was abandoned after Yuksel Yesilova, the coach of the visitors from Mersin, was stabbed six times in the stomach by his brother.

Yesilova said of his sibling: "He has psychological issues. I have filed complaints against him several times and he was hit with a three-month ban for that. Three years ago, I wrote to the Interior Ministry asking for help because it was obvious he wanted to harm me or a member of my family."

Stabbed...Yesilova

Sporting Gijon 2 (Botia 47, Diego Castro pen 86)
Mallorca 0 Att: 20,000

Villarreal 4 (Rossi 23, pen 55, Borja Valero 31, Nilmar 77)
Espanyol 0 Att: 18,000

Zaragoza 3 (Edmilson 41, Marco Perez 68, Ander Herrera 82)
Malaga 5 (Fernando 2, 28, Juanmi 7, 29, Owusu-Abeyie 35) Att: 21,000

Monday, September 13
Almeria 2 (Piatti 21, Ulloa 90+1)
Real Sociedad 2 (Tamudo 8, Sutil 33) Att: 13,000

Saturday, September 18
Espanyol 1 (Callejon 47)
Almeria 0 Att: 24,345

Mallorca 2 (Castro pen 25, De Guzman 90+3)
Osasuna 0 Att: 12,000

Real Sociedad 1 (Tamudo 62)
Real Madrid 2 (Di Maria 51, Cristiano Ronaldo 74) Att: 30,000

Sporting Gijon 2 (De las Cuevas 13, Sangoy 23)
Athletic Bilbao 2 (Gurpegui 28, Llorente 58) Att: 20,000

Sunday, September 19
Atletico Madrid 1 (Raul Garcia 25)
Barcelona 2 (Messi 13, Pique 32) Att: 53,000

Hercules 1 (Trezeguet pen 43)
Valencia 2 (Mata 2, Pablo Hernandez 23) Att: 24,000

Levante 1 (Caicedo 90)
Villarreal 2 (Nilmar 16, 43) Att: 11,500

Malaga 1 (Rondon 14)
Sevilla 2 (Alfaro 20, Caceres 45+1) Att: 25,000

Racing Santander 2 (Henrique 76, Ariel 90)
Zaragoza 0 Att: 13,475

Monday, September 20
Deportivo La Coruna 2 (Guardado pen 50, pen 57)
Getafe 2 (Colotto og 33, Arizmendi 69) Att: 13,000

SPAIN

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Valencia	3	3	0	0	6	2	9
Sevilla	3	2	1	0	6	2	7
Real Madrid	3	2	1	0	3	1	7
At Madrid	3	2	0	1	7	3	6
Villarreal	3	2	0	1	6	2	6
Barcelona	3	2	0	1	5	3	6
Espanyol	3	2	0	1	4	5	6
Getafe	3	1	1	1	7	6	4
Ath Bilbao	3	1	1	1	4	4	4
R Sociedad	3	1	1	1	4	4	4
Mallorca	3	1	1	1	2	2	4
Sporting Gijon	3	1	1	1	4	6	4
Hercules	3	1	0	2	3	3	3
Dep Coruna	3	0	3	0	2	2	3
Malaga	3	1	0	2	7	8	3
R Santander	3	1	0	2	2	4	3
Almeria	3	0	2	1	2	3	2
Osasuna	3	0	1	2	0	3	1
Zaragoza	3	0	1	2	3	7	1
Levante	3	0	0	3	3	10	0

38-round season (19x2); bottom 3 will be relegated

LEADING GOALSCORERS
3 Diego Forlan (Atletico Madrid)
3 Fernando Llorente (Athletic Bilbao)
3 Nilmar (Villarreal)

SWEDEN

Aug 23: Halmstads 0 Malmo 2; GAIS 1 Brommapojkarna 1; Orebro 1 AIK 0.
Aug 25: Helsingborgs 1 Trelleborgs 0.
Aug 27: GAIS 0 Djurgardens 1.
Aug 28: Brommapojkarna 0 Atvidabergs 2; Orebro 3 Helsingborgs 0.
Aug 29: Mjallby 1 Trelleborgs 1; AIK 1 IFK 2; Halmstads 2 Kalmar 1; Malmo 1 Elfsborg 0; Gefle 0 Hacken 2.
Sep 10: Hacken 2 Halmstads 0.
Sep 11: Trelleborgs 4 AIK 1; Elfsborg 2 Mjallby 0; Atvidabergs 3 Malmo 3; Helsingborgs 3 Gefle 1.
Sep 12: Djurgardens 2 Orebro 1.
Sep 13: Kalmar 3 Brommapojkarna 0; IFK 2 GAIS 1.
Sep 15: Mjallby 2 Hacken 2; Atvidabergs 2 Djurgardens 1; Malmo 2 Helsingborgs 0.
Sep 16: Brommapojkarna 0 Trelleborgs 3.
Sep 18: Hacken 0 AIK 1; Kalmar 3 GAIS 1.
Sep 19: Gefle 2 Brommapojkarna 0; Halmstads 1 Orebro 1; IFK 3 Atvidabergs 0; Trelleborgs 1 Elfsborg 1.
Sep 20: Helsingborgs 2 Mjallby 1; Djurgardens 1 Malmo 0.

SWEDEN

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Malmo	24	16	4	4	44	22	52
Helsingborgs	24	16	4	4	36	20	52
Orebro	23	12	3	8	31	24	39
Elfsborg	23	10	8	5	42	27	38
Djurgardens	24	10	5	9	26	27	35
IFK	23	9	7	7	34	19	34
Mjallby	24	8	8	8	28	25	32
Trelleborgs	24	9	5	10	29	33	32
Kalmar	23	8	7	8	31	32	31
Hacken	24	8	6	10	29	34	30
GAIS	23	6	7	10	19	27	25
AIK	23	7	4	12	19	28	25
Halmstads	23	7	4	12	21	32	25
Atvidabergs	24	6	6	12	26	40	24
Gefle	23	6	5	12	25	34	23
Bromm'karna	24	6	5	13	16	32	23

30-round season (15x2); bottom 2 will be relegated; 3rd bottom will enter rel/prom play-off

SWITZERLAND

Aug 28: Zurich 3 St Gallen 1; Basle 4 Xamax 1.
Aug 29: Lucerne 1 Thun 1; Bellinzona 1 Grasshopper 1; Sion 2 Young Boys 0.
Sep 11: Thun 1 Zurich 3.
Sep 12: Lucerne 6 Bellinzona 2; Xamax 0 St Gallen 1; Young Boys 2 Basle 2.

SWITZERLAND

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Lucerne	8	5	2	1	25	10	17
Zurich	8	4	2	2	17	12	14
Basle	8	4	2	2	16	12	14
Sion	7	3	3	1	11	7	12
Thun	8	2	5	1	13	11	11
Bellinzona	8	3	2	3	12	16	11
Young Boys	8	2	3	3	8	10	9
St Gallen	8	2	1	5	7	18	7
Grasshopper	7	1	3	3	7	12	6
Xamax	8	1	1	6	11	19	4

36-round season (9x4); bottom team will be relegated; 2nd bottom will enter rel/prom play-off

TURKEY

Aug 23: Trabzonspor 3 Fenerbahce 2; Kasimpasa 0 Bucaspor 0.
Aug 27: Ankaragucu 1 Kayserispor 1; Gaziantepspor 2 Konyaspor 2.
Aug 28: Istanbul BB 3 Kasimpasa 1; Sivasspor 0 Bursaspor 2; Bucaspor 3 Genclerbirligi 1.
Aug 29: Fenerbahce 4 Manisaspor 2; Karabukspor 1 Besiktas 4; Eskisehirspor 1 Galatasaray 3.
Aug 30: Antalyaspor 0 Trabzonspor 0.
Sep 10: Bursaspor 2 Eskisehirspor 1.
Sep 11: Kayserispor 2 Fenerbahce 0; Konyaspor 1 Bucaspor 1; Besiktas 4 Ankaragucu 0; Manisaspor 1 Antalyaspor 2.
Sep 13: Kasimpasa 1 Karabukspor 2; Trabzonspor 6 Sivasspor 1; Genclerbirligi 2 Istanbul BB 1; Galatasaray 1 Gaziantepspor 0.
Sep 17: Trabzonspor 1 Manisaspor 3.
Sep 18: Sivasspor 1 Eskisehirspor 1; Ankaragucu 3 Kasimpasa 0; Antalyaspor 2 Kayserispor 1; Bucaspor 0 Galatasaray 1.
Sep 19: Karabukspor 3 Genclerbirligi 0; Fenerbahce 1 Besiktas 1; Istanbul BB 1 Konyaspor 0.

TURKEY

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Bursaspor	4	4	0	0	7	1	12
Trabzonspor	5	3	1	1	12	6	10
Besiktas	5	3	1	1	10	4	10
Kayserispor	5	3	1	1	7	3	10
Istanbul BB	5	3	0	2	7	5	9
Karabukspor	5	3	0	2	8	7	9
Galatasaray	5	3	0	2	6	5	9
Antalyaspor	5	2	2	1	5	7	8
Fenerbahce	5	2	1	2	11	8	7
Ankaragucu	5	2	1	2	7	7	7
Bucaspor	5	1	2	2	4	4	5
Konyaspor	5	1	2	2	5	6	5
Genclerbirligi	5	1	2	2	3	7	5
Sivasspor	5	1	2	2	5	11	5
Gaziantepspor	4	0	3	1	2	3	3
Manisaspor	5	1	0	4	7	12	3
Eskisehirspor	5	0	2	3	4	8	2
Kasimpasa	5	0	2	3	2	8	2

34-round season (17x2); bottom 3 will be relegated

UKRAINE

Aug 27: Sevastopol 0 Vorskla 0.
Aug 28: Arsenal 1 Obolon 0.
Aug 29: Metalurh Zaporizhya 0 Metalist 2; Shakhtar 1 Illichivets 0; Zorya 5 Tavriya 3; Kryvbas 0 Dynamo 1.
Aug 30: Dnipro 1 Metalurh Donetsk 2; Karpaty 1 Volyn 0.
Sep 10: Volyn 1 Sevastopol 0; Obolon 1 Shakhtar 0.
Sep 11: Tavriya 0 Arsenal 1; Metalurh Donetsk 2 Kryvbas 2; Dynamo 2 Metalurh Zaporizhya 0.
Sep 12: Illichivets 2 Karpaty 3; Vorskla 0 Dnipro 2; Metalist 3 Zorya 0.
Sep 17: Metalurh Zaporizhya 1 Metalurh Donetsk 2; Volyn 3 Illichivets 1.
Sep 18: Sevastopol 2 Dnipro 1; Kryvbas 1 Vorskla 0.
Sep 19: Zorya 1 Dynamo 2; Arsenal 0 Metalist 1; Karpaty 3 Obolon 0; Shakhtar 4 Tavriya 1.

UKRAINE

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Shakhtar	10	8	1	1	19	4	25
Dynamo	10	7	2	1	16	8	23
Karpaty	10	6	2	2	14	8	20
Dnipro	10	6	1	3	16	6	19
Metalist	10	6	1	3	17	9	19
Metalurh D	10	5	2	3	14	11	17
Vorskla	10	4	2	4	12	11	14
Arsenal	10	4	2	4	10	10	14
Kryvbas	10	3	4	3	10	13	13
Volyn	10	3	2	5	6	11	11
Obolon	10	3	2	5	7	15	11
Tavriya	10	3	1	6	13	16	10
Zorya	10	2	3	5	11	16	9
Sevastopol	10	2	3	5	4	13	9
Illichivets	10	1	4	5	12	19	7
Metalurh Z	10	0	2	8	3	14	2

30-round season (15x2); bottom 2 will be relegated

SOUTH AMERICA

RECOPA

(2009 Libertadores Cup winners, Estudiantes v 2009 Sudamericana Cup winners, LDU Quito)

1st leg
Aug 25
LDU Quito (Ecu) 2 (Barcos 9, 17)
Estudiantes (Arg) 1 (Rojo 11)
HT: 2-1. **Att:** 42,000. **Ref:** Silvera (Uru)
LDU: Dominguez - Guagua, N Araujo, Calderon, Reasco, W Araujo, Urrutia, Ambrosi (Chila 81), Lara (Luna 85), Salgueiro (Bolanos 64), Barcos.
Estudiantes: Taborda - Mercado, Roncaglia, F Fernandez, Re, Rojo, Perez, Brana, Veron, Benitez (Sanchez 82; Hoyos 88), Gonzalez (Auzqui 66).

2nd leg
Sep 8
Estudiantes 0
LDU Quito 0
Att: 24,500. **Ref:** Simon (Bra)
LDU Quito 2-1 on agg
Estudiantes: Taborda - Mercado, F Fernandez, Re (Penalba 85), Rojo, Perez, Brana, Veron, Benitez (Pereyra 70), G Fernandez (Auzqui 46), Gonzalez.
LDU: Cevallos - Guagua, N Araujo, Calderon, Urrutia, De la Cruz, W Araujo (Espinoza 90+2), Reasco, Ambrosi, Barcos, Luna (Lara 72; Salgueiro 90+4).

SUDAMERICANA CUP

1st round

1st legs - Aug 3-24; 2nd legs - Aug 10-Sep 2
Atletico Huila (Col) v Trujillanos (Ven)
4-1, 1-1 (agg 5-2)
Cesar Vallejo (Per) v Barcelona (Ecu)
1-2, 1-3 (agg 2-5)
Defensor Sporting (Uru) v Olimpia (Par)
2-0, 1-1 (agg 3-1)
Deportivo Lara (Ven) v Indep Santa Fe (Col)
2-0, 0-4 (agg 2-4)
Deportivo Quito (Ecu) v San Martin (Per)
3-2, 1-2 (agg 4-4; San Martin on away goals)
Guarani (Par) v River Plate (Uru)
2-0, 2-4 (agg 4-4; Guarani on away goals)
Universidad de Chile (Chl) v Oriente Petrolero (Bol)
2-2, 0-1 (agg 2-3)
Universitario (Bol) v Colo Colo (Chl)
2-0, 1-3 (agg 3-3; Universitario on away goals)

ARGENTINA

Top sides slip up

Estudiantes missed an opportunity to return to the top of the apertura when they suffered a shock 2-1 defeat to All Boys. Alejandro Sabella's side are now fourth, three points behind San Lorenzo but with a game in hand.

River Plate also squandered their chance to go top as they went down to an Ivan Borghello goal at Newell's Old Boys.

Independiente are in last place following their 4-0 thrashing at Banfield in which Gabriel Valles, who came on as a substitute for the visitors, was sent off. Gimnasia had earlier moved off the bottom of the table after they secured their first win of the season. Two goals from Hernan Encina and an Alvaro Navarro strike gave Diego Cocca's side a 3-0 win over Huracan.

Number one...Ceni

Martin Palermo leads the scoring charts with five goals following his hat-trick against Colon Santa Fe. He could have added to his tally even further but he missed a penalty.

BRAZIL

Ceni scores again

Rogerio Ceni, the world's highest-scoring goalkeeper, took his tally to 90 as he helped Sao Paulo hold Fluminense to a 2-2 draw at the Maracana.

Ceni equalised with a free-kick after former Portugal midfielder Deco had put Flu ahead with his first goal for the club in his third match since joining from Chelsea.

Sao Paulo striker Fernandao made it 2-1 with a header before half-time but defender Leandro Euzebio headed the home side's

2nd round

1st legs - Aug 4-Sep 16; 2nd legs - Aug 11-Sep 15

Barcelona v Penarol (Uru)
0-1, 1-2 (agg 1-3)
Goias (Bra) v Gremio (Bra)
1-1, 2-0 (agg 3-1)
Gremio Prudente (Bra) v Atletico Mineiro (Bra)
0-0, 0-1 (agg 0-1)
Independiente (Arg) v Argentinos Juniors (Arg)
1-0, 1-1 (agg 2-1)
Santos (Bra) v Avai (Bra)
1-3, 1-0 (agg 2-3)
Velez Sarsfield (Arg) v Banfield (Arg)
0-1, 1-1 (agg 1-2)
Vitoria (Bra) v Palmeiras (Bra)
2-0, 0-3 (agg 2-3)

Remaining games*:
Atletico Huila v San Jose (Bol)
Defensor Sporting v Huancayo (Per)
Guarani v San Felipe (Chl)
Independiente Santa Fe v Caracas (Ven)
Newell's Old Boys (Arg) v Estudiantes (Arg)
Oriente Petrolero v Tolima (Col)
San Martin v Emelec (Ecu)
Universitario v Cerro Porteno (Par)
**Not completed by press time*

Bye to last 16:
LDU Quito (Ecu; holders)

ARGENTINA

Apertura

Friday, August 27
Huracan 1 (Zarate 20)
Newell's Old Boys 1 (Sperdutti 50)

Saturday, August 28
Colon 1 (Diaz 31)
Godoy Cruz 3 (Castillo 69, Ramirez 72, Salinas 77)

Lanus 0
Banfield 0

San Lorenzo 3 (Menseguez 55, Pereyra 68, Tula 82)
All Boys 1 (Matos pen 70)

Tigre 3 (Echeverria 10, Morales 80, Stracqualursi 81)
Quilmes 0

Sunday, August 29
Argentinos Juniors 0
River Plate 0

Boca Juniors 2 (Battaglia 37, Viatri 67)
Velez Sarsfield 1 (Silva 85)

Independiente 1 (Galeano 90)
Arsenal 2 (Sena 60, Choy 78)

Olimpo 1 (Bareiro 39)
Racing Club 0

Friday, September 3
Godoy Cruz 1 (Villar 8)
Estudiantes 2 (Dutari og 21, Gonzalez 90+1)

Racing Club 1 (Bieler 31)
Colon 2 (Fuertes 5, Larrivey 41)

Saturday, September 4
All Boys 1 (Perez Garcia 39)
Olimpo 0

Arsenal 1 (Obolo 40)
Argentinos Juniors 0

Boca Juniors 1 (Palermo 90+4)
San Lorenzo 2 (Balsas 52, Menseguez 88)

Newell's Old Boys 1 (Formica 76)
Independiente 1 (Silvera 24)

Sunday, September 5
Banfield 1 (Romero 87)
Tigre 1 (Leone 82)

Gimnasia La Plata 0
Lanus 2 (Regueiro 48, Romero 70)

Quilmes 1 (Hirsig 1)
Huracan 2 (Quintana 45, Nieto 74)

Velez Sarsfield 2 (Martinez 33, Silva pen 59)
River Plate 1 (Buonanotte 41)

Friday, September 10
Colon 1 (Fuertes 54)
All Boys 1 (Matos pen 8)

Tigre 2 (Castano 30, Telechea 47)
Gimnasia La Plata 0

Saturday, September 11
Estudiantes 2 (Perez 46, Mercado 56)
Racing Club 0

Huracan 2 (Zarate pen 10, 56)
Banfield 2 (Carrusca 17, Zelaya 62)

Lanus 1 (Regueiro pen 28)
Godoy Cruz 4 (Ramirez 11, Rojas 61, Castillo 76, Villar 82)

San Lorenzo 0
Velez Sarsfield 0

Sunday, September 12
Argentinos Juniors 1 (Vargas 63)
Newell's Old Boys 2 (Cichero 78, Rodriguez 84)

Independiente 0
Quilmes 0

Olimpo 1 (Cobo 18)
Boca Juniors 3 (Viatri 15, Palermo 61, Insaurralde 69)

River Plate 1 (Funes Mori 75)
Arsenal 0

Friday, September 17
Gimnasia La Plata 3 (Navarro 33, Encina 82, 90+1)
Huracan 0

Racing Club 4 (Martinez 43, Moreno pen 64, Cahais 73, Hauche 90)
Lanus 0

Saturday, September 18
Arsenal 0
Velez Sarsfield 0

Godoy Cruz 1 (Ramirez 18)
Tigre 2 (Stracqualursi 47, Perez 75)

Quilmes 2 (Torres 63, Morales 78)
Argentinos Juniors 2 (Sabia 49, Berardo 90+3)

San Lorenzo 3 (Tula 31, Bottinelli 63, Rivero 80)
Olimpo 1 (Vega 14)

Sunday, September 19
All Boys 2 (Dominguez 29, Grazzini 50)
Estudiantes 1 (Brana 45)

Banfield 4 (Ramirez 4, 51, Romero 21, Zelaya 82)
Independiente 0

Boca Juniors 3 (Palermo 45, 50, 85)
Colon 1 (Moreno y Fabianesi 42)

Newell's Old Boys 1 (Borghello 11)
River Plate 0

ARGENTINA – APERTURA

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
San Lorenzo	7	4	3	0	12	6	15
Velez	7	4	2	1	8	4	14
Banfield	7	3	4	0	10	4	13
Estudiantes	6	4	1	1	8	3	13
Arsenal	7	4	1	2	8	5	13
River Plate	7	4	1	2	7	5	13
Newell's	7	3	3	1	8	5	12
Godoy Cruz	7	3	2	2	13	9	11
Tigre	7	3	1	3	9	7	10
Boca Juniors	7	3	1	3	11	10	10
All Boys	7	3	1	3	8	8	10
Racing Club	7	3	0	4	9	8	9
Lanus	7	2	3	2	7	11	9
Huracan	7	2	2	3	7	11	8
Colon	7	1	3	3	6	10	6
Olimpo	7	2	0	5	5	10	6
Gimnasia LP	6	1	2	3	3	5	5
Quilmes	7	0	4	3	5	11	4
Argentinos	7	0	3	4	5	10	3
Independiente	7	0	3	4	5	12	3

19-round tournament (19x1); no relegation after apertura

LEADING GOALSCORERS

5	Martin Palermo (Boca Juniors)
5	David Ramirez (Godoy Cruz)
4	Gabriel Funes Mori (River Plate)
4	Santiago Silva (Velez Sarsfield)
4	Lucas Viatri (Boca Juniors)

BOLIVIA

Clausura

Aug 26: Potosi 2 Aurora 1.
Aug 28: San Jose 2 Potosi 3; Wilstermann 4 La Paz 2.
Aug 29: Bolivar 1 Aurora 0; Mamore 3 Oriente 2; Universitario 2 Guabira 0; Blooming 2 The Strongest 1.
Sep 4: The Strongest 2 Wilstermann 1; Oriente 2 San Jose 1.
Sep 5: Potosi 1 Universitario 1; La Paz 1 Bolivar 3; Guabira 0 Blooming 0; Aurora 3 Mamore 0.
Sep 8: Wilstermann 1 Guabira 1; The Strongest 1 La Paz 3; Blooming 2 Potosi 2.
Sep 9: Mamore 2 Bolivar 1.
Sep 10: San Jose 3 Aurora 3.
Sep 11: Guabira 2 The Strongest 1.
Sep 12: La Paz 1 Mamore 0; Potosi 2 Wilstermann 1; Bolivar 0 San Jose 0; Aurora 2 Universitario 1; Oriente 1 Blooming 0.
Sep 18: San Jose 1 Mamore 0; Universitario 1 Bolivar 0.
Sep 19: Guabira 1 La Paz 0; The Strongest 4 Potosi 2; Wilstermann 4 Oriente 2; Blooming 0 Aurora 1.

BOLIVIA – CLAUSURA

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Aurora	10	5	2	3	16	12	17
Potosi	10	5	2	3	19	17	17
The Strongest	10	5	1	4	23	17	16
Guabira	10	4	4	2	9	7	16
San Jose	10	4	3	3	18	16	15
Blooming	10	4	3	3	10	9	15
Bolivar	9	4	2	3	10	7	14
Universitario	9	3	3	3	12	12	12
Oriente	8	3	2	3	11	12	11
Wilstermann	10	2	3	5	13	15	9
Mamore	10	2	3	5	6	16	9
La Paz	10	2	2	6	10	17	8

22-round tournament (11x2); team with worst average points over two most recent seasons will be relegated; 2nd worst will enter rel/prom play-off

BRAZIL

Aug 25: Botafogo 1 Ceara 0; Avai 0 Internacional 1; Goias 0 Fluminense 3; Gremio Prudente 0 Paranaense 1; Gremio 1 Santos 2; Cruzeiro 1 Corinthians 0; Sao Paulo 0 Vasco da Gama 0.
Aug 26: Palmeiras 0 Goianiense 3; Vitoria 1 Guarani 1; Flamengo 0 Mineiro 0.
Aug 28: Santos 2 Goias 0; Ceara 2 Gremio Prudente 2; Vasco da Gama 1 Cruzeiro 1; Internacional 1 Botafogo 0.
Aug 29: Mineiro 1 Palmeiras 2; Guarani 2 Flamengo 1; Corinthians 2 Vitoria 1; Paranaense 1 Gremio 1; Goianiense 2 Avai 2; Fluminense 2 Sao Paulo 2.
Sep 1: Gremio Prudente 0 Botafogo 1; Gremio 1 Guarani 0; Vitoria 0 Internacional 0; Goias 1 Mineiro 3; Fluminense 1 Palmeiras 1; Paranaense 2 Ceara 1; Cruzeiro 1 Flamengo 0.
Sep 2: Sao Paulo 2 Goianiense 1; Santos 2 Avai 1.
Sep 4: Corinthians 5 Goias 1; Ceara 0 Vasco da Gama 2; Botafogo 2 Gremio 2.
Sep 5: Flamengo 0 Santos 0; Guarani 2 Fluminense 1; Palmeiras 2 Cruzeiro 3; Avai 0 Paranaense 1; Internacional 2 Gremio Prudente 0; Goianiense 4 Vitoria 1; Mineiro 2 Sao Paulo 3.
Sep 8: Fluminense 3 Ceara 1; Cruzeiro 1 Internacional 0; Gremio 2 Goianiense 0; Goias 3 Guarani 1; Sao Paulo 2 Flamengo 0; Vitoria 1 Palmeiras 1; Paranaense 1 Corinthians 1.
Sep 9: Vasco da Gama 1 Mineiro 1; Gremio Prudente 1 Avai 1; Santos 0 Botafogo 1.
Sep 11: Corinthians 0 Gremio 1; Flamengo 2 Vitoria 2; Goianiense 2 Fluminense 1.
Sep 12: Palmeiras 0 Vasco da Gama 0; Botafogo 2 Sao Paulo 0; Mineiro 1 Gremio Prudente 0; Avai 1 Cruzeiro 2; Guarani 1 Paranaense 0; Internacional 0 Goias 0; Ceara 2 Santos 1.
Sep 15: Santos 4 Goianiense 2; Cruzeiro 4 Guarani 2; Gremio 1 Palmeiras 2; Goias 4 Botafogo 1; Paranaense 2 Mineiro 1; Fluminense 1 Corinthians 2; Gremio Prudente 1 Flamengo 2; Vitoria 0 Ceara 0.
Sep 16: Sao Paulo 1 Internacional 3; Vasco da Gama 1 Avai 1.
Sep 18: Corinthians 3 Gremio Prudente 0; Botafogo 2 Cruzeiro 2; Goianiense 1 Paranaense 2.
Sep 19: Palmeiras 0 Sao Paulo 2; Guarani 0 Santos 0; Mineiro 2 Vitoria 3; Internacional 1 Vasco da Gama 0; Flamengo 3 Fluminense 3; Ceara 1 Goias 1; Avai 0 Gremio 3.

equaliser on the hour.

Fluminense's 15-match unbeaten streak was eventually halted with a 2-1 loss to Guarani, which allowed Corinthians to move ahead at the halfway point of the Brazilian league season.

Defending champions Flamengo and Santos drew 0-0 in the last match to be played at Maracana before it closes for renovation for the 2014 World Cup.

Meanwhile, a row involving Brazil teenager Neymar at the end of Santos' 2-1 loss away to Ceara developed into a mass brawl in which his team-mate Marquinhos was struck in the ribs, allegedly by a policeman.

Neymar became embroiled in an argument with home defender Joao Marcos and when players began fighting, police came onto the pitch.

"I was pulling Neymar (away from the fighting) and the cop gave it to me with his truncheon in my ribs," Marquinhos told reporters.

More silverware...LDU

ECUADOR

LDU's third title

LDU Quito won the Recopa when they held Estudiantes to a 0-0 draw in the second leg for a 2-1 aggregate victory to claim their third international trophy in two years after they won the Libertadores Cup in 2008 and the Sudamericana Cup in 2009. LDU's Argentinian striker Hernan Barcos scored the two goals that ultimately won the title.

PARAGUAY

Amarilla quits

Raul Amarilla, who was voted South American Player of the Year in 1990, resigned as coach of 3 de Febrero after they lost 2-1 to Guarani.

BRAZIL

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Corinthians	22	13	5	4	40	22	44
Fluminense	23	12	6	5	40	24	42
Cruzeiro	23	11	8	4	31	22	41
Internacional	22	11	5	6	28	21	38
Botafogo	23	10	8	5	36	26	38
Santos	22	10	5	7	34	27	35
Paranaense	23	10	4	9	28	32	34
Sao Paulo	23	8	7	8	30	30	31
Ceara	23	7	9	7	19	20	30
Guarani	23	7	9	7	26	31	30
Gremio	23	7	8	8	30	28	29
Vasco	22	6	11	5	21	21	29
Palmeiras	23	6	11	6	24	26	29
Vitoria	23	6	10	7	28	31	28
Flamengo	23	6	9	8	21	23	27
Avai	23	6	7	10	31	36	25
Mineiro	23	6	3	14	28	40	21
Goias	23	5	6	12	24	40	21
Goianiense	23	5	5	13	27	35	20
G Prudente*	23	4	8	11	21	32	17

38-round season (19x2); bottom 4 will be relegated
**3pts deducted for fielding an ineligible player*

CHILE

Aug 27: Univ Chile 1 Wanderers 0.
Aug 28: San Felipe 1 La Serena 0; Palestino 2 Morning 1; Everton 1 San Luis 1; Cobresal 3 Univ Catolica 1; Univ Concepcion 3 Cobreloa 0; Espanola 5 Huachipato 0.
Aug 29: Nublense 0 Colo Colo 0; Audax Italiano 2 O'Higgins 1.
Sep 5: Cobresal 1 Univ Chile 2; Espanola 3 Everton 2.
Sep 6: Everton 2 Nublense 3.
Sep 10: Univ Catolica 2 Espanola 0.
Sep 11: La Serena 1 Nublense 0.
Sep 12: O'Higgins 1 San Felipe 2; Huachipato 1 Everton 1; Cobreloa 0 Palestino 0; Wanderers 0 Cobresal 4; Colo Colo 1 Audax Italiano 3.
Sep 14: Morning 1 Univ Chile 2.
Sep 15: San Luis 1 Univ Concepcion 0.
Sep 17: San Felipe 1 Cobreloa 0; Palestino 0 Wanderers 1; Cobresal 2 Huachipato 1; Espanola 2 Morning 2; Audax Italiano 2 La Serena 1.
Sep 18: Univ Concepcion 2 Univ Catolica 2; Nublense 4 San Luis 0.

CHILE

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Univ Chile	23	16	3	4	58	30	51
Univ Catolica	24	15	5	4	47	25	50
Colo Colo	23	15	3	5	47	22	48
Audax Italiano	24	13	4	7	52	45	43
San Felipe	24	11	5	8	29	29	38
Cobresal	24	11	4	9	39	35	37
Espanola	24	9	8	7	39	36	35
Huachipato	24	8	7	9	32	35	31
U Concepcion	24	7	9	8	29	29	30
La Serena	24	9	3	12	30	48	30
O'Higgins	23	7	6	10	29	28	27
Palestino	24	7	6	11	23	26	27
Wanderers	24	7	6	11	32	37	27
Nublense	24	6	9	9	36	46	27
Cobreloa	24	6	8	10	27	30	26
Everton	23	6	7	10	28	35	25
Morning	24	4	7	13	20	36	19
San Luis	24	3	8	13	23	48	17

34-round season (17x2); bottom 2 will be relegated; 3rd & 4th bottom will enter rel/prom play-offs

COLOMBIA

Clausura

Regular season

Aug 28: Huila 3 Tolima 1; America 1 Pereira 1; Once Caldas 2 Nacional 3; Indep Medellin 1 Cartagena 1.
Aug 29: Junior 0 Quindio 2; Indep Santa Fe 0 La Equidad 1; Cortulua 2 Envigado 1; Cucuta 2 Dep Cali 1.
Sep 3: La Equidad 0 America 2.
Sep 4: Tolima 1 Indep Santa Fe 2; Nacional 2 Chico 0.
Sep 5: Envigado 2 Cartagena 1; Pereira 0 Cortulua 0; Dep Cali 5 Once Caldas 3; Quindio 1 Cucuta 0; Junior 1 Indep Medellin 1; Millonarios 1 Huila 2.
Sep 8: Junior 4 Nacional 2.
Sep 10: Cortulua 2 Quindio 1; Tolima 3 Huila 0.
Sep 11: Millonarios 0 Indep Santa Fe 0; Envigado 1 Cucuta 1; Cartagena 1 Junior 1.
Sep 12: Pereira 0 Once Caldas 0; La Equidad 1 Chico 1; Nacional 1 Indep Medellin 0; America 1 Dep Cali 2.
Sep 18: Indep Medellin 2 Envigado 2; Huila 2 Nacional 2; America 1 Tolima 0.
Sep 19: Cartagena 1 Pereira 0; Cortulua 2 La Equidad 2; Chico 1 Dep Cali 0; Once Caldas 4 Quindio 2; Cucuta 3 Junior 3; Indep Santa Fe 2 Millonarios 0.

COLOMBIA – CLAUSURA REGULAR

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Ind Santa Fe	10	7	2	1	15	5	23
Huila	10	5	3	2	16	16	18
Tolima	10	5	2	3	16	10	17
Cucuta	10	5	2	3	14	10	17
Nacional	8	5	1	2	13	11	16
Quindio	10	5	1	4	13	12	16
La Equidad	10	4	3	3	13	11	15
America	10	4	2	4	12	11	14
Cartagena	10	3	4	3	11	10	13
Chico	9	3	4	2	8	9	13
Once Caldas	9	4	1	4	18	20	13
Junior	10	2	6	2	15	15	12
Dep Cali	10	3	3	4	14	14	12
Ind Medellin	9	2	5	2	8	9	11
Cortulua	10	2	3	5	9	14	9
Millonarios	8	1	2	5	7	12	5
Envigado	10	1	2	7	9	17	5
Pereira	9	0	4	5	7	12	4

18-round regular season – top 8 will enter championship play-offs; team with worst average points over three most recent seasons will be relegated; 2nd worst will enter rel/prom play-off

ECUADOR

2nd stage

Aug 27: Dep Quito 1 Olmedo 0; Manta 2 Cuenca 0.
Aug 28: Univ Catolica 1 Macara 1; El Nacional 0 Barcelona 1; Espoli 1 Independiente 0.
Aug 29: Emelec 1 LDU 1.
Sep 11: Independiente 2 Manta 2; Olmedo 0 Emelec 1; Barcelona 1 Dep Quito 0.
Sep 12: Cuenca 0 El Nacional 0; Macara 1 Espoli 1.
Sep 13: LDU 1 Univ Catolica 0.
Sep 17: Manta 1 Macara 0.
Sep 18: El Nacional 3 Independiente 0; Espoli 0 LDU 1; Barcelona 1 Cuenca 2.
Sep 19: Univ Catolica 1 Olmedo 2; Dep Quito 1 Emelec 0.

ECUADOR – 2ND STAGE

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
LDU	11	8	3	0	21	10	27
Cuenca	11	6	4	1	16	11	22
Barcelona	10	6	1	3	16	9	19
Emelec	11	4	6	1	12	6	18
Manta	11	5	3	3	16	12	18
Dep Quito	11	5	3	3	13	12	18
Espoli	10	2	4	4	9	11	10
El Nacional	11	2	4	5	9	13	10
Univ Catolica	11	2	3	6	13	18	9
Macara	11	2	3	6	13	19	9
Olmedo	11	2	3	6	7	14	9
Independiente	11	1	3	7	11	21	6

22-round stage (11x2) – 2nd stage winner then meets 1st stage winner to decide overall champion; the 2 teams with fewest points from both stages combined will be relegated

PARAGUAY

Clausura

Aug 27: Libertad 2 Guarani 0.
Aug 28: Tacuary 1 Sol de America 1; Olimpia 2 3 de Febrero 0.
Aug 29: Luqueno 0 Trinidense 0; Colombia 1 Nacional 2; Rubio Nu 1 Cerro Porteno 2.
Sep 4: Nacional 0 Rubio Nu 0; Cerro Porteno 2 Libertad 0.
Sep 5: Sol de America 1 Colombia 2; Trinidense 1 Tacuary 1; Luqueno 0 Olimpia 0; Guarani 2 3 de Febrero 1.
Sep 11: Tacuary 0 Luqueno 3; Libertad 1 Nacional 0.
Sep 12: Rubio Nu 2 Sol de America 1; Colombia 1 Trinidense 1; Olimpia 2 Guarani 2; 3 de Febrero 0 Cerro Porteno 1.
Sep 17: Cerro Porteno 2 Guarani 1.
Sep 18: Sol de America 0 Libertad 1; Nacional 1 3 de Febrero 0.
Sep 19: Luqueno 1 Colombia 1; Trinidense 1 Rubio Nu 2; Tacuary 1 Olimpia 4.

PARAGUAY – CLAUSURA

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Libertad	10	8	0	2	20	5	24
Cerro Porteno	10	7	3	0	18	6	24
Rubio Nu	10	4	4	2	14	10	16
Olimpia	10	4	3	3	16	12	15
Guarani	10	4	3	3	12	10	15
Nacional	10	4	3	3	8	6	15
Colombia	10	3	3	4	11	13	12
Sol America	10	3	2	5	10	12	11
Luqueno	10	1	6	3	8	10	9
Tacuary	10	2	3	5	8	15	9
Trinidense	10	1	4	5	8	24	7
3 de Febrero	10	0	4	6	4	14	4

22-round tournament (11x2); team with worst average points over three most recent seasons will be relegated; 2nd worst will enter rel/prom play-off

PERU

1st stage

Aug 29: Alianza Atletico 1 Cesar Vallejo 2; Alianza Lima 3 Total Chalaco 1; Cienciano 3 Sporting Cristal 3; Inti Gas 2 Jose Galvez 0; Leon 5 Huancayo 2; San Martin 0 Melgar 1; Juan Aurich 1 CNI 1; Sport Boys 1 Universitario 2.
Cienciano v Jose Galvez (July 18) – awarded 3-0 to Jose Galvez because Cienciano failed to pay debts in time

PERU – 1ST STAGE – FINAL

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
San Martin	30	19	5	6	61	30	62
Leon	30	17	5	8	55	31	56
Alianza Lima	30	17	5	8	50	31	56
Cesar Vallejo	30	16	5	9	48	30	53
Universitario*	30	16	5	9	43	22	51
Juan Aurich	30	13	9	8	42	31	48
S Cristal	30	12	8	10	43	42	44
Huancayo	30	11	5	14	44	48	38
Inti Gas	30	12	2	16	36	43	38
Melgar	30	9	9	12	38	49	36
CNI**	30	10	7	13	39	51	33
Cienciano***	30	9	6	15	35	50	31
T Chalaco***	30	8	8	14	31	43	30
Sport Boys	30	8	6	16	34	55	30
Jose Galvez	30	6	10	14	19	39	28
Al Atletico	30	5	9	16	24	47	24

**2pts deducted for failing to pay a former coach*
***4pts deducted for failing to pay two players*
****2pts deducted for failing to pay a former player*

2nd stage

Group A

Sep 11: Universitario 1 Total Chalaco 0.
Sep 12: Jose Galvez 1 Alianza Lima 1; CNI 2 Inti Gas 0; Sporting Cristal 0 San Martin 1.
Sep 18: Alianza Lima 1 CNI 1; Inti Gas 1 Universitario 0.
Sep 19: Total Chalaco 0 Sporting Cristal 1; San Martin 3 Jose Galvez 0.

PERU – 2ND STAGE – GROUP A

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
San Martin*	32	21	5	6	65	30	69
Alianza Lima	32	17	7	8	52	33	58
Universitario**	32	17	5	10	44	23	54
S Cristal	32	13	8	11	44	43	47
Inti Gas	32	13	2	17	37	45	41
CNI***	32	11	8	13	42	52	41
T Chalaco**	32	8	8	16	31	46	30
Jose Galvez	32	6	11	15	20	43	29

**San Martin gained a 1pt bonus because their youth/reserve team were runners-up in the 1st stage of their league*
***Points deducted; see 1st stage table and notes for explanation*
****CNI's deducted points were restored before the start of the 2nd stage*

Group B

Sep 11: Juan Aurich 4 Sport Boys 1; Alianza Atletico 1 Cesar Vallejo 4; Huancayo 0 Leon 0.
Sep 12: Cienciano 0 Melgar 1.
Sep 18: Leon 1 Juan Aurich 1.
Sep 19: Sport Boys 2 Cienciano 0; Melgar 3 Alianza Atletico 3.

PERU – 2ND STAGE – GROUP B

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Leon	32	17	7	8	56	32	58
Cesar Vallejo*	31	17	5	9	52	31	58
Juan Aurich	32	14	10	8	47	33	52
Melgar	32	10	10	12	42	52	40
Huancayo	31	11	6	14	44	48	39
Sport Boys	32	9	6	17	37	59	33
Cienciano**	32	9	6	17	35	53	31
Al Atletico	32	5	10	17	28	54	25

**Cesar Vallejo gained a 2pt bonus because their youth/reserve team won the 1st stage of their league*
***Points deducted; see 1st stage table and notes for explanation*

14-round stage (7x2), with teams carrying forward full points and goals record from 1st stage – group winners then meet to decide 2nd stage winners

worldmags

Double figures...Orozco

MEXICO

Orozco makes it 10

Cruz Azul recovered from a shock defeat to Toronto in their opening CONCACAF Champions League group game by scoring 11 goals in their next two games as all four Mexican teams topped their groups at the halfway stage.

Leading the way for Cruz Azul is 22-year-old Javier Orozco, whose hat-trick in the 6-0 victory at Arabe Unido means he has now scored 10 times in four games in this season's competition – and 23 goals in 20 games since the tournament was inaugurated a little over two years ago.

USA

Becks is back

David Beckham returned to MLS action for Los Angeles Galaxy after six months out

Making his mark...Beckham is booked against Columbus

URUGUAY

Apertura

Aug 25: River Plate 1 Defensor 1; Wanderers 1 Nacional 1.
Aug 28: Central Espanol 0 Cerro 0; Racing 1 Miramar Misiones 2; Danubio 2 Bella Vista 0.
Aug 29: Rampla 0 River Plate 1; Tacuarembo 1 El Tanque Sisley 2; Defensor 3 Liverpool 0; Nacional 0 Fenix 3.
Sep 4: Bella Vista 3 Rampla 2; Miramar Misiones 1 Danubio 2; El Tanque Sisley 1 Nacional 1.
Sep 5: Wanderers 2 Tacuarembo 0; Liverpool 1 Racing 0; River Plate 1 Central Espanol 3; Fenix 2 Penarol 2.
Sep 8: Penarol 3 Miramar Misiones 1.
Sep 18: Racing 2 River Plate 0; Penarol 0 El Tanque Sisley 0.
Sep 19: Central Espanol 0 Miramar Misiones 1; Rampla 0 Cerro 0; Defensor 1 Wanderers 2; Danubio 1 Fenix 0; Tacuarembo 3 Liverpool 2; Nacional 1 Bella Vista 0.

URUGUAY – APERTURA	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Danubio	4	3	1	0	5	1	10
Tanque Sisley	4	2	2	0	4	2	8
Wanderers	3	2	1	0	5	2	7
Liverpool	4	2	0	2	6	7	6
M Misiones	4	2	0	2	5	6	6
Bella Vista	4	2	0	2	4	5	6
Fenix	4	1	2	1	6	4	5
Penarol	3	1	2	0	5	3	5
Nacional	4	1	2	1	3	5	5
Defensor	3	1	1	1	5	3	4
C Espanol	4	1	1	2	3	3	4
Tacuarembo	4	1	1	2	5	7	4
River Plate	4	1	1	2	3	6	4
Cerro	3	0	3	0	0	0	3
Racing	4	1	0	3	3	4	3
Rampla	4	0	1	3	3	7	1

15-round tournament (15x1); no relegation after apertura

VENEZUELA

Apertura

Aug 24: Zamora 0 Petare 1.
Aug 25: Caracas 1 Carabobo 0.
Aug 28: Caroni 0 Monagas 3.
Aug 29: Aragua 0 Zulia 1; Yaracuyanos 1 Caracas 0; Petare 1 Lara 2; Trujillanos 1 Mineros 1; Tachira 3 Carabobo 1; Estudiantes 4 Venezuela 0; Anzoategui 3 Zamora 2; Esppor 2 El Vigia 0.
Sep 1: Aragua 2 Lara 2.
Sep 11: Zulia 2 Esppor 5.
Sep 12: Carabobo 0 Trujillanos 0; Monagas 6 Estudiantes 0; Venezuela 1 Yaracuyanos 2; Caroni 0 Aragua 2; El Vigia 3 Petare 3; Lara 1 Anzoategui 1; Caracas 0 Tachira 0; Zamora 2 Mineros 2.
Sep 19: Carabobo 1 Zamora 1; Yaracuyanos 0 Monagas 0; Trujillanos 2 Caracas 0; Tachira 4 Venezuela 1; Estudiantes 2 Caroni 1; Mineros 1 Lara 1; Anzoategui 2 El Vigia 2; Petare 1 Zulia 0; Esppor 3 Aragua 0.

VENEZUELA – APERTURA	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Tachira	6	5	1	0	14	4	16
Esppor	5	5	0	0	16	3	15
Caracas	7	4	1	2	6	3	13
Monagas	6	3	2	1	14	7	11
Petare	6	3	2	1	10	8	11
Estudiantes	6	3	1	2	8	9	10
Yaracuyanos	6	2	3	1	5	4	9
Zulia	6	3	0	3	10	10	9
Aragua	6	2	2	2	6	7	8
Carabobo	7	1	4	2	7	8	7
Mineros	5	1	3	1	8	7	6
Trujillanos	6	1	3	2	5	6	6
Lara	6	1	3	2	7	9	6
Anzoategui	6	1	3	2	10	13	6
Venezuela	6	1	2	3	6	13	5
El Vigia	6	0	4	2	7	12	4
Zamora	6	0	2	4	6	12	2
Caroni	6	0	0	6	2	12	0

17-round tournament (17x1); no relegation after apertura

CONCACAF

CHAMPIONS LEAGUE

Group A

Aug 24: Arabe Unido (Pan) 1 Toronto (Can) 0.
Aug 25: Cruz Azul (Mex) 5 Real Salt Lake (USA) 4.
Sep 15: Arabe Unido 0 Cruz Azul 6; Real Salt Lake 4 Toronto 1.

CHAMPIONS LEAGUE – GROUP A	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Cruz Azul	3	2	0	1	12	6	6
Salt Lake	3	2	0	1	10	7	6
Toronto	3	1	0	2	3	6	3
Arabe Unido	3	1	0	2	2	8	3

Aug 17	Toronto v Cruz Azul	2-1
Aug 18	Real Salt Lake v Arabe Unido	2-1
Aug 24	Arabe Unido v Toronto	1-0
Aug 25	Cruz Azul v Real Salt Lake	5-4
Sep 15	Arabe Unido v Cruz Azul	0-6
	Real Salt Lake v Toronto	4-1
Sep 21	Cruz Azul v Toronto	
Sep 22	Arabe Unido v Real Salt Lake	
Sep 28	Cruz Azul v Arabe Unido	
	Toronto v Real Salt Lake	
Oct 19	Real Salt Lake v Cruz Azul	
	Toronto v Arabe Unido	

Group B

Aug 24: Santos Laguna (Mex) 1 Columbus Crew (USA) 0.
Aug 26: Municipal (Gtm) 1 Joe Public (T&T) 1.
Sep 14: Columbus Crew 3 Joe Public 0; Municipal 2 Santos Laguna 2.

CHAMPIONS LEAGUE – GROUP B	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Santos	3	2	1	0	8	4	7
Columbus	3	2	0	1	4	1	6
Municipal	3	0	2	1	3	4	2
Joe Public	3	0	1	2	3	9	1

Aug 18	Columbus Crew v Municipal	1-0
	Joe Public v Santos Laguna	2-5
Aug 24	Santos Laguna v Columbus	1-0
Aug 26	Municipal v Joe Public	1-1
Sep 14	Columbus Crew v Joe Public	3-0
	Municipal v Santos Laguna	2-2
Sep 21	Columbus v Santos Laguna	
Sep 23	Joe Public v Municipal	
Sep 29	Municipal v Columbus Crew	
	Santos Laguna v Joe Public	
Oct 19	Santos Laguna v Municipal	
Oct 21	Joe Public v Columbus Crew	

Group C

Aug 25: Seattle Sounders (USA) 0 Monterrey (Mex) 2.
Aug 26: Saprissa (CR) 4 Marathon (Hnd) 1.
Sep 14: Monterrey 2 Marathon 0; Saprissa 2 Seattle Sounders 0.

CHAMPIONS LEAGUE – GROUP C	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Monterrey	3	3	0	0	5	0	9
Saprissa	3	2	0	1	6	2	6
Marathon	3	1	0	2	3	7	3
Seattle	3	0	0	3	1	6	0

Aug 17	Monterrey v Saprissa	1-0
Aug 19	Marathon v Seattle Sounders	2-1
Aug 25	Seattle Sounders v Monterrey	0-2
Aug 26	Saprissa v Marathon	4-1
Sep 14	Monterrey v Marathon	2-0
	Saprissa v Seattle Sounders	2-0
Sep 22	Marathon v Saprissa	
	Monterrey v Seattle Sounders	
Sep 28	Saprissa v Monterrey	
Sep 29	Seattle Sounders v Marathon	
Oct 19	Seattle Sounders v Saprissa	
Oct 20	Marathon v Monterrey	

Group D

Aug 25: Puerto Rico Islanders (PR) 4 CD FAS (ELS) 1.
Aug 26: Toluca (Mex) 4 Olimpia (Hnd) 0.
Sep 15: Toluca 3 Puerto Rico Islanders 0.
Sep 16: Olimpia 2 CD FAS 0.

CHAMPIONS LEAGUE – GROUP D	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Toluca	3	2	1	0	7	0	7
Puerto Rico	3	1	1	1	5	5	4
Olimpia	3	1	1	1	3	5	4
CD FAS	3	0	1	2	1	6	1

Aug 17	Puerto Rico v Olimpia	1-1
Aug 18	CD FAS v Toluca	0-0
Aug 25	Puerto Rico v CD FAS	4-1
Aug 26	Toluca v Olimpia	4-0
Sep 15	Toluca v Puerto Rico	3-0
Sep 16	Olimpia v CD FAS	2-0
Sep 22	CD FAS v Puerto Rico	
Sep 23	Olimpia v Toluca	
Sep 29	Puerto Rico v Toluca	
Sep 30	CD FAS v Olimpia	
Oct 20	Olimpia v Puerto Rico	
	Toluca v CD FAS	

Top two in each group qualify for quarter-finals

MEXICO

Apertura

Regular season

Aug 27: Tecos 1 Morelia 1.
Aug 28: Cruz Azul 3 Tigres 2; Guadalajara 0 Pumas 0; Santos 3 Atlas 1; Monterrey 1 Jaguares 1; San Luis 2 Atlante 1.
Aug 29: Puebla 3 Pachuca 1; Toluca 2 Queretaro 0; America 1 Necaxa 1.
Sep 5: Guadalajara 3 Tecos 0.
Sep 10: Necaxa 1 Toluca 1.
Sep 11: Queretaro 5 Santos 2; Jaguares 4 Puebla 0; Tigres 0 Monterrey 1; Pachuca 1 Guadalajara 1; Atlas 1 Cruz Azul 3; Atlante 0 Tecos 1.
Sep 12: Morelia 0 America 2; Pumas 0 San Luis 1.
Sep 17: Tecos 2 Pumas 2.
Sep 18: Cruz Azul 3 Queretaro 0; Monterrey 2 Atlas 0; Santos 2 Necaxa 1; Guadalajara 0 Jaguares 3; San Luis 1 Pachuca 0; Atlante 2 Morelia 0.
Sep 19: Toluca 2 America 1; Puebla 1 Tigres 3.

MEXICO – APERTURA REGULAR – GROUP 1	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Santos	8	6	0	2	19	9	18
Monterrey	8	5	3	0	17	9	18
Tigres	8	3	2	3	10	8	11
Guadalajara	7	2	3	2	6	6	9
Tecos	8	2	2	4	10	17	8
Necaxa	8	1	4	3	6	9	7

MEXICO – APERTURA REGULAR – GROUP 2	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Toluca	8	3	4	1	10	7	13
San Luis	8	4	1	3	9	8	13
America	8	3	3	2	10	8	12
Atlante	8	2	1	5	8	13	7
Pachuca	8	1	3	4	9	15	6
Atlas	8	0	1	7	4	14	1

MEXICO – APERTURA REGULAR – GROUP 3	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Cruz Azul	8	7	0	1	21	8	21
Pumas	8	3	2	3	12	14	11
Puebla	8	3	2	3	11	15	11
Morelia	7	3	1	3	9	6	10
Queretaro	8	3	1	4	9	16	10
Jaguares	8	2	3	3	12	10	9

17-round regular season (17x1) – top 2 in each group and the 2 other teams with most points, regardless of group, will enter championship play-offs. No relegation after apertura

UNITED STATES

Regular season

Aug 28: Columbus 0 Dallas 0; Toronto 0 Salt Lake 0; New York 2 San Jose 0; New England 1 Philadelphia 2; Colorado 3 Houston 0; Seattle 2 Chicago 1; Los Angeles 0 Kansas City 2.
Aug 29: Chivas 1 DC United 0.
Sep 4: Philadelphia 1 Kansas City 1; Chicago 1 Los Angeles 1; New England 3 Seattle 1; DC United 0 Columbus 1; Dallas 1 Toronto 0; Salt Lake 1 New York 0; Colorado 3 Chivas 0.
Sep 5: Houston 1 San Jose 2.
Sep 8: Chicago 0 Toronto 0.
Sep 9: Seattle 0 Salt Lake 0.
Sep 10: Chivas 2 New England 0.
Sep 11: Toronto 0 DC United 1; New York 3 Colorado 1; Philadelphia 1 Chicago 0; San Jose 0 Dallas 0; Los Angeles 3 Columbus 1.
Sep 15: San Jose 1 Philadelphia 0.
Sep 16: Dallas 2 New York 2.
Sep 18: Salt Lake 1 Chicago 0; Columbus 0 Seattle 4; Houston 1 Toronto 2; Colorado 3 New England 0; Los Angeles 2 DC United 1.
Sep 19: Chivas 0 Kansas City 2.

USA – REGULAR – EASTERN CONFERENCE	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Columbus	25	13	5	7	33	27	44
New York	25	12	5	8	32	27	41
Toronto	25	8	7	10	24	28	31
Kansas City	23	8	6	9	24	24	30
Chicago	23	6	8	9	28	31	26
Philadelphia	24	6	6	12	27	39	24
New England	24	7	3	14	24	41	24
DC United	25	5	3	17	17	39	18

with injury as a 70th minute substitute in the 3-1 victory over Columbus Crew.

The 35-year-old former England captain was booked just four minutes after coming onto the pitch as Galaxy won with goals from Edson Buddle, Dema Kovalenko and Jovan Kirovski. Andres Mendoza replied for Columbus.

After 23 matches in their maiden season, Philadelphia Union finally kept their first clean sheet in MLS with a 1-0 win at home to Chicago Fire. While Sebastien Le Toux was the goalscorer, the hero of the day was goalkeeper Brad Knighton, who replaced Chris Seitz in goal for only his second appearance.

JAPAN

Trebles for imports

Brazilian strikers were on fire in the latest round of J.League games, with Marquinhos and Juninho both grabbing hat-tricks.

Marquinhos scored all Kashima Antlers' goals in their home victory over Omiya Ardija to close the gap on leaders Nagoya Grampus – who drew 1-1 with Yokohama – to five points.

Juninho hit his treble in Kawasaki Frontale's 6-1 demolition of bottom side Shonan Bellmare.

Hat-trick...Juninho

SAUDI ARABIA

Five on the trot

Al Ittihad remain top of the table after they claimed their fifth consecutive win with a 3-1 victory over Al Ahli. Algerian striker Abdulmalik Ziaiya and Portuguese midfielder Nuno Assis put the visitors 2-0 up before Motaz Al Mousa replied for the hosts. Paulo Jorge scored the third with 12 minutes remaining.

USA – REGULAR – WESTERN CONFERENCE

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Los Angeles	25	15	5	5	38	19	50
Salt Lake	25	13	8	4	38	16	47
Dallas	24	10	12	2	31	19	42
Colorado	24	10	7	7	32	24	37
San Jose	23	10	6	7	25	23	36
Seattle	25	10	6	9	30	29	36
Chivas	24	7	4	13	25	31	25
Houston	24	6	5	13	29	40	23

30-round regular season (15x2) – top 2 in each conference and the 4 other teams with most points, regardless of conference, will enter championship play-offs. No relegation from this league

AFRICA

CHAMPIONS LEAGUE

Group A

Aug 27: ES Setif (Alg) 3 Dynamos (Zim) 0.
Aug 28: Esperance (Tun) 3 TP Mazembe (DRC) 0.
Sep 11: Esperance 2 ES Setif 2.
Sep 12: TP Mazembe 2 Dynamos 1.
Sep 18: ES Setif 0 TP Mazembe 0; Dynamos 0 Esperance 1.

CHAMPIONS LEAGUE – GROUP A – FINAL

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Esperance	6	4	1	1	9	4	13
TP Mazembe	6	3	2	1	8	7	11
ES Setif	6	1	3	2	7	6	6
Dynamos	6	1	0	5	2	9	3

Group B

Aug 29: Heartland (Nga) 2 Ismaili (Egy) 1; Al Ahly (Egy) 1 JS Kabylie (Alg) 1.
Sep 10: JS Kabylie 1 Ismaili 0.
Sep 12: Al Ahly 2 Heartland 1.
Sep 19: Heartland 1 JS Kabylie 1; Ismaili 4 Al Ahly 2.

CHAMPIONS LEAGUE – GROUP B – FINAL

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
JS Kabylie	6	4	2	0	6	2	14
Al Ahly	6	2	2	2	8	9	8
Ismaili	6	2	0	4	7	8	6
Heartland	6	1	2	3	5	7	5

Top two in both groups qualified for semi-finals

Semi-finals draw

Al Ahly v Esperance
TP Mazembe v JS Kabylie
1st legs - October 1-3; 2nd legs - October 15-17

CONFEDERATION CUP

Group A

Aug 29: Djoliba (Mli) 0 Al Ittihad (Lby) 1; Al Hilal (Sud) 4 AS Fan (Ngr) 2.
Sep 10: Al Hilal 2 Djoliba 1.
Sep 12: Al Ittihad 4 AS Fan 0.
Sep 18: AS Fan 1 Al Ittihad 3.
Sep 19: Djoliba 2 Al Hilal 0.

CONFEDERATION CUP – GROUP A

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Al Ittihad	4	3	0	1	9	3	9
Al Hilal	4	3	0	1	8	6	9
Djoliba	4	1	1	2	3	3	4
AS Fan	4	0	1	3	3	11	1

Group B

Aug 28: Zanaco (Zam) 1 Haras Hedood (Egy) 1; CS Sfaxien (Tun) 3 FUS Rabat (Mor) 0.
Sep 11: Zanaco 1 CS Sfaxien 0.
Sep 12: FUS Rabat 1 Haras Hedood 0.
Sep 17: CS Sfaxien 2 Zanaco 1.
Sep 19: Haras Hedood 1 FUS Rabat 2.

CONFEDERATION CUP – GROUP B

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
FUS Rabat	4	3	0	1	4	4	9
CS Sfaxien	4	2	1	1	5	2	7
Zanaco	4	1	1	2	3	4	4
Haras Hedood	4	0	2	2	2	4	2

Top two in both groups qualify for semi-finals
Remaining matchdays:
October 1-3; October 15-17

EGYPT

EGYPT

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Masry	6	3	2	1	11	6	11
ENPPI	6	3	1	2	7	5	10
Petrojet	6	3	1	2	5	5	10
Entag Harby	6	3	1	2	6	7	10
Shorta	5	2	3	0	7	3	9
Ismaili	3	3	0	0	5	2	9
Zamalek	5	2	2	1	9	7	8
ML Makasa	5	2	1	2	10	7	7
Jaish	5	2	1	2	4	4	7
Ittihad	5	1	3	1	5	4	6
Ahly	3	1	2	0	2	1	5
Gouna	5	1	1	3	4	7	4
Haras Hedood	3	0	3	0	5	5	3
Wadi Degla	5	1	0	4	9	16	3
Smouha	5	0	2	3	3	7	2
Mokawloon	5	0	1	4	5	11	1

Standings on September 21
30-round season (15x2); bottom 3 will be relegated

SOUTH AFRICA

SOUTH AFRICA

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Ajax CT	3	3	0	0	7	2	9
Mamelodi S	3	3	0	0	6	1	9
Kaizer Chiefs	3	2	1	0	4	1	7
Santos	3	2	1	0	3	1	7
Golden Arrows	3	2	0	1	5	2	6
Orlando P'tes	3	1	2	0	3	2	5
Wits Univ	3	1	1	1	5	3	4
AmaZulu	3	1	1	1	6	7	4
Free State S	3	0	3	0	1	1	3
Bloemfontein	3	1	0	2	3	4	3
Platinum Stars	3	1	0	2	3	6	3
SuperSport	3	1	0	2	3	6	3
Moroka S	3	0	1	2	4	7	1
Vasco	3	0	1	2	2	5	1
Maritzburg	3	0	1	2	3	7	1
Mpumalanga	3	0	0	3	3	6	0

Standings on September 21
30-round season (15x2); bottom team will be relegated; 2nd bottom will enter rel/prom play-offs

ASIA

AUSTRALIA

Regular season

Aug 27: Brisbane 1 Wellington 0.
Aug 28: North Queensland 2 Adelaide 3; Sydney 1 Central Coast 1.
Aug 29: Gold Coast 0 Melbourne Victory 1; Melbourne Heart 2 Perth 2.
Sep 3: Central Coast 2 Melbourne Victory 0.
Sep 4: Melbourne Heart 1 North Queensland 0; Sydney 1 Adelaide 3.
Sep 5: Newcastle 0 Brisbane 0; Perth 2 Wellington 1.
Sep 10: Central Coast 1 Melbourne Heart 0.
Sep 11: Wellington 2 Sydney 1; Adelaide 2 Newcastle 1.
Sep 12: Melbourne Victory 3 Brisbane 0; Perth 0 Gold Coast 1.
Sep 15: Melbourne Victory 0 Wellington 0.
Sep 17: Newcastle 2 Perth 0.
Sep 18: North Queensland 0 Melbourne Victory 0; Brisbane Roar 1 Adelaide 1.
Sep 19: Melbourne Heart 2 Wellington 1; Gold Coast 0 Central Coast 0.

AUSTRALIA – REGULAR

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Adelaide	7	4	3	0	13	8	15
Central Coast	7	3	3	1	6	4	12
Perth	7	3	2	2	10	9	11
Melbourne V	8	2	4	2	9	9	10
Brisbane	6	2	3	1	3	4	9
Wellington	7	2	2	3	9	9	8
Melbourne H	7	2	2	3	8	9	8
Gold Coast	5	1	3	1	4	4	6
Newcastle	6	1	3	2	4	4	6
N Queensland	6	1	3	2	9	10	6
Sydney	6	0	2	4	7	12	2

30-round regular season (10x3) – top 6 will enter championship play-offs; no relegation from this league

JAPAN

Aug 28: Cerezo 2 Omiya 0; Urawa 1 Kashima 1; Sanfrecce 2 Montedio 1; Vissel 0 Tokyo 0; Nagoya 1 Kyoto 0; Vegalta 2 Shonan 1.
Aug 29: Gamba 2 Jubilo 0; Yokohama 3 Albirex 0; Shimizu 2 Kawasaki 0.
Sep 11: Omiya 3 Shimizu 0; Cerezo 1 Sanfrecce 1; Jubilo 3 Shonan 2; Kawasaki 1 Yokohama 3; Kyoto 3 Vissel 0; Kashima 1 Vegalta 0; Albirex 1 Gamba 2.
Sep 12: Montedio 0 Nagoya 1; Tokyo 0 Urawa 1.
Sep 18: Sanfrecce 1 Vissel 1; Jubilo 2 Tokyo 1; Nagoya 1 Yokohama 1; Kashima 3 Omiya 0; Urawa 1 Shimizu 1; Shonan 1 Kawasaki 6; Gamba 3 Cerezo 2.
Sep 19: Vegalta 2 Montedio 0; Albirex 1 Kyoto 1.

JAPAN

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Nagoya	23	15	3	5	36	25	48
Kashima	23	12	7	4	38	21	43
Cerezo	23	11	7	5	38	22	40
Gamba	23	11	7	5	43	31	40
Shimizu	23	11	7	5	43	33	40
Kawasaki	23	11	5	7	41	32	38
Yokohama	23	11	5	7	32	24	38
Albirex	23	9	8	6	32	28	35
Sanfrecce	23	9	7	7	27	27	34
Urawa	23	9	5	9	33	27	32
Jubilo	23	8	6	9	27	33	30
Montedio	23	8	4	11	18	28	28
Vegalta	23	6	6	11	28	34	24
Omiya	23	6	6	11	20	28	24
Vissel	23	5	7	11	22	33	22
Tokyo	23	4	9	10	22	28	21
Kyoto	23	3	6	14	22	41	15
Shonan	23	3	5	15	25	52	14

34-round season (17x2); bottom 3 will be relegated

SOUTH KOREA

Regular season

Aug 28: Gangwon 1 Daegu 0; Daejeon 1 Jeju 3; Gwangju 1 Gyeongnam 1; Suwon 4 Seoul 2; Seongnam 1 Jeonbuk 0.
Aug 29: Busan 5 Chunnam 3; Ulsan 1 Pohang 1.
Sep 1: Seongnam 0 Suwon 0; Pohang 1 Seoul 4.
Sep 4: Chunnam 3 Daejeon 0; Jeju 2 Ulsan 1; Gangwon 1 Suwon 2; Jeonbuk 3 Pohang 2; Daegu 2 Seongnam 2; Incheon 1 Busan 1; Seoul 3 Gwangju 0.
Sep 10: Jeonbuk 1 Gangwon 3.
Sep 11: Daejeon 2 Busan 0; Seoul 4 Daegu 0; Gyeongnam 0 Ulsan 1; Suwon 0 Jeju 3.
Sep 12: Gwangju 1 Incheon 1.
Sep 18: Ulsan 3 Chunnam 0; Busan 1 Gangwon 1; Daegu 1 Incheon 4; Seongnam 0 Jeju 1; Suwon 0 Gyeongnam 2.
Sep 19: Daejeon 3 Gwangju 0.

SOUTH KOREA – REGULAR

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Jeju	21	14	4	3	41	19	46
Seoul	20	14	0	6	42	18	42
Gyeongnam	20	11	6	3	30	18	39
Seongnam	21	11	5	5	36	19	38
Jeonbuk	20	11	4	5	41	29	37
Ulsan	21	10	5	6	29	25	35
Suwon	22	9	3	10	32	37	30
Busan	21	7	7	7	31	27	28
Incheon	20	7	3	10	33	36	24
Pohang	21	5	7	9	31	41	22
Chunnam	20	5	6	9	33	39	21
Gangwon	21	5	5	11	26	40	20
Daejeon	21	5	4	12	21	37	19
Gwangju	20	3	7	10	13	32	16
Daegu	21	3	4	14	22	44	13

28-round regular season (14x2) – top 6 will enter championship play-offs

FORTHCOMING FIXTURES

October 6
AFC Champions League semi-final, first leg
October 8/9
Euro 2012 qualifiers
October 9
African Nations Cup qualifiers
October 12
Euro 2012 qualifiers
October 20
AFC Champions League semi-final, second leg
October 30
CAF Champions League Final, first leg

worldmags

UEFA CHAMPIONS LEAGUE

AJAX (HOL)

GOALKEEPERS		
40	Marco BIZOT	10.03.91
1	Maarten STEKELENBURG	22.09.82
30	Jeroen VERHOEVEN	30.04.80
DEFENDERS		
3	Toby ALDERWEIRELD (Blg)	02.03.89
5	Vurnon ANITA	04.04.89
29	Thimothee ATOUBA (Cam)	17.02.82
17	Daley BLIND	09.03.90
32	Nicolai BOILESEN (Den)	16.02.92
23	OLEGUER (Spa)	02.02.80
13	Andre OOIJER	11.07.74
2	Gregory VAN DER WIEL	03.02.88
4	Jan VERTONGHEN (Blg)	24.04.87
MIDFIELDERS		
10	Siem DE JONG	28.01.89
20	Demy DE ZEEUW	26.05.83
25	Mitchell DONALD	10.12.88
11	Urby EMANUELSON	16.06.86
6	Eyong ENOH (Cam)	23.03.86
8	Christian ERIKSEN (Den)	14.02.92
18	Rasmus LINDGREN (Swe)	29.11.84
15	Nicolas LODEIRO (Uru)	21.03.89
34	Evander SNO	09.04.87
19	Teemu TAINIO (Fin)	27.11.79
FORWARDS		
36	Darko BODUL (Cro)	11.01.89
9	Mounir EL HAMDAOUI (Mor)	14.07.84
21	HYUN Jun-suk (SKo)	29.06.91
35	MIDO (Egy)	23.02.83
33	Aras OZBILIZ	09.03.90
16	Luis SUAREZ (Uru)	24.01.87
7	Miralem SULEJMANI (Ser)	05.12.88
24	Marvin ZEEGELAAR	12.08.90
COACH		
Martin JOL		16.01.56

ARSENAL (ENG)

GOALKEEPERS		
1	Manuel ALMUNIA (Spa)	19.05.77
21	Lukasz FABIANSKI (Pol)	18.04.85
24	Vito MANNONE (Ita)	02.03.88
53	Wojciech SZCZESNY (Pol)	18.04.90
DEFENDERS		
22	Gael CLICHY (Fra)	26.07.85
38	Thomas CRUISE	09.03.91
20	Johan DJOUROU (Swi)	18.01.87
27	Emmanuel EBOUE (IvC)	04.06.83
28	Kieran GIBBS	26.09.89
45	Gavin HOYTE	06.06.90
3	Bacary SAGNA (Fra)	14.02.83
6	Laurent KOSCIELNY (Fra)	10.09.85
18	Sebastien SQUILLACI (Fra)	11.08.80
5	Thomas VERMAELEN (Blg)	14.11.85
MIDFIELDERS		
15	DENILSON (Bra)	16.02.88
2	Abou DIABY (Fra)	11.05.86
4	Cesc FABREGAS (Spa)	04.05.87
46	Henri LANSBURY	12.10.90
8	Samir NASRI (Fra)	26.06.87
16	Aaron RAMSEY (Wal)	26.12.90
7	Tomas ROSICKY (CzR)	04.10.80
17	Alex SONG (Cam)	09.09.87
19	Jack WILSHERE	01.01.92
FORWARDS		
23	Andrei ARSHAVIN (Rus)	29.05.81
52	Nicklas BENDTNER (Den)	16.01.88
29	Marouane CHAMAKH (Mor)	10.01.84
57	Gilles SUNU (Fra)	30.03.91
10	Robin VAN PERSIE (Hol)	06.08.83
11	Carlos VELA (Mex)	01.03.89
14	Theo WALCOTT	16.03.89
COACH		
Arsene WENGER (Fra)		22.10.49

AUXERRE (FRA)

GOALKEEPERS		
30	Willy MAEYENS	05.06.89
16	Remy RIOU	06.08.87
1	Olivier SORIN	16.04.81
DEFENDERS		
23	Jeremy BERTHOD	24.04.84
34	Willy BOLY	03.02.91
6	Adama COULIBALY (Mli)	10.09.80
4	Stephane GRICHTING (Swi)	30.03.79
2	Cedric HENGBART	13.07.80
12	Jean-Pascal MIGNOT	26.02.81
20	Amadou SIDIBE (Mli)	19.02.86
MIDFIELDERS		
26	Vincent ACAPANDIE	09.02.90
7	Kamel CHAFNI (Mor)	11.06.82
5	Dariusz DUDKA (Pol)	09.12.83
21	Steeven LANGIL	04.03.88
37	Stephane MADEIRA	04.01.90
13	Christopher MISSILOU	18.07.92
29	Delvin NDINGA (Con)	14.03.88
17	Benoit PEDRETTI	12.11.80
15	Frederic SAMMARITANO	23.03.86
19	Yaya SANOGO	27.01.93
27	Alain TRAORE (BuF)	01.01.88
FORWARDS		
33	Anicet ANDRIANANTENAINA (Mad)	16.03.90
9	Valter BIRSA (Sln)	07.08.86
25	Maxime BOURGEOIS	03.02.91
18	Roy CONTOUT	11.02.85
22	Ireneusz JELEN (Pol)	09.04.81
8	Anthony LE TALLEC	03.10.84
10	Alexandre LICATA	02.01.84
14	Dennis OLIECH (Ken)	02.02.85
11	Julien QUERCIA	17.08.86
COACH		
Jean FERNANDEZ		08.10.54

BARCELONA (SPA)

GOALKEEPERS		
31	Ruben MINO	18.02.89
38	OIER Olazabal	14.09.89
13	Jose PINTO	08.11.75
1	Victor VALDES	14.01.82
DEFENDERS		
22	Eric ABIDAL (Fra)	11.09.79
2	DANI ALVES (Bra)	06.05.83
32	Marc BARTRA	15.01.91
19	MAXWELL (Bra)	27.08.81
18	Gabriel MILITO (Arg)	07.09.80
35	Marc MUNIESA	23.03.92
3	Gerard PIQUE	02.02.87
5	Carles PUYOL	13.04.78
33	SERGI GOMEZ	28.03.92
MIDFIELDERS		
21	ADRIANO (Bra)	26.10.84
30	Thiago ALCANTARA	11.04.91
16	Sergio BUSQUETS	16.07.88
34	Jonathan DOS SANTOS (Mex)	26.04.90
26	Andreu FONTAS	14.11.89
8	Andres INIESTA	11.05.84
11	JEFFREN Rodriguez	20.01.88
15	Seydou KEITA (Mli)	16.01.80
14	Javier MASCHERANO (Arg)	08.06.84
28	Sergi ROBERTO	07.02.92
37	Oriol ROMEU	24.09.91
29	VICTOR VAZQUEZ	20.01.87
6	XAVI	25.01.80
FORWARDS		
9	BOJAN Krkic	28.08.90
10	Lionel MESSI (Arg)	24.06.87
17	PEDRO Rodriguez	28.07.87
7	David VILLA	03.12.81
COACH		
Pep GUARDIOLA		18.01.71

BURSASPOR (TUR)

GOALKEEPERS		
89	HARUN Tekin	17.06.89
27	Dimitar IVANKOV (Bul)	30.10.75
1	YAVUZ Ozkan	19.05.85
DEFENDERS		
21	ALI Tandogan	25.12.77
38	IBRAHIM Ozturk	28.06.81
11	Giani KIRITA (Rom)	03.03.77
23	MUSTAFA Keceli	15.09.78
4	OMER Erdogan	03.05.77
2	SERDAR Aziz	23.10.90
55	Milan STEPANOV (Ser)	02.04.83
3	Gokcek VEDERSON (Bra)	22.07.81
MIDFIELDERS		
17	Pablo BATALLA (Arg)	16.01.84
6	BEKIR Ozan Has	08.02.85
25	Ivan ERGIC (Serb)	21.01.81
5	HUSEYIN Cimsir	26.05.79
7	Federico INSUA (Arg)	03.01.80
35	ISMAIL Odabasi	07.08.91
20	OZAN Ipek	10.10.86
13	Gustav SVENSSON (Swe)	07.02.87
22	TURGAY Bahadir	15.01.84
10	VOLKAN Sen	07.07.87
FORWARDS		
14	MUHAMMET Demir	10.01.92
29	Leonel NUNEZ (Arg)	13.10.84
9	SERCAN Yildirim	05.04.90
19	Damian STEINERT (Arg)	25.02.86
COACH		
Ertugrul SAGLAM		19.11.69

CFR CLUJ (ROM)

GOALKEEPERS		
1	NUNO CLARO (Por)	07.01.77
44	Eduard STANCIOIU	03.03.81
12	Calin TIUT	02.01.92
DEFENDERS		
15	Hugo ALCANTARA (Bra)	28.07.79
20	CADU (Por)	21.12.81
66	EDIMAR (Bra)	21.05.86
23	LEO VELOSO (Bra)	29.05.87
4	Cristian PANIN	09.06.78
13	Felice PICCOLO (Ita)	27.08.83
24	Ionut RADA	06.07.82
2	TONY (Por)	20.12.80
MIDFIELDERS		
16	Rafael BASTOS (Bra)	01.01.85
11	Tomas COSTA (Arg)	30.01.85
19	Juan CULIO (Arg)	30.08.83
7	Emil DICA	17.07.82
22	Ioan HORA	21.08.88
8	Dominique KIVUVU (Ang)	16.09.87
28	Emmanuel KONE (IvC)	31.12.86
6	Gabriel MURESAN	13.02.82
21	Sergiu NEGRUT	01.04.93
FORWARDS		
32	Sasa BJELANOVIC (Cro)	11.06.79
10	Roberto DE ZERBI (Ita)	06.06.79
99	Ferdinando SFORZINI (Ita)	04.12.84
9	Lacina TRAORE (IvC)	20.08.90
COACH		
Sorin CARTU		12.11.55

CHELSEA (ENG)

GOALKEEPERS		
1	Petr CECH (CzR)	20.05.82
40	HILARIO (Por)	21.10.75
60	Jan SEBEK (CzR)	31.03.91
22	Ross TURNBULL	04.01.85
DEFENDERS		
33	ALEX (Bra)	17.06.82
17	Jose BOSINGWA (Por)	24.08.82
43	Jeffrey BRUMA (Hol)	13.11.91
3	Ashley COLE	20.12.80
19	Paulo FERREIRA (Por)	18.01.79
2	Branislav IVANOVIC (Ser)	22.02.84
26	John TERRY	07.12.80
38	Patrick VAN AANHOLT (Hol)	29.08.90
MIDFIELDERS		
10	Yossi BENAYOUN (Isr)	05.05.80
48	Conor CLIFFORD (Ire)	01.10.91
5	Michael ESSIEN (Gha)	03.12.82
8	Frank LAMPARD	20.06.78
15	Florent MALOUDA (Fra)	13.06.80
46	Josh MCEACHRAN	01.03.93
12	John Obi MIKEL (Nig)	22.04.87
7	RAMIRES (Bra)	24.03.87
59	Michael WOODS	06.04.90
18	Yuri ZHIRKOV (Rus)	20.08.83
FORWARDS		
39	Nicolas ANELKA (Fra)	14.03.79
45	Fabio BORINI (Ita)	29.03.91
11	Didier DROGBA (IvC)	11.03.78
44	Gael KAKUTA (Fra)	21.06.91
21	Salomon KALOU (IvC)	05.08.85
53	Marko MITROVIC (Swe)	27.06.92
60	Daniel PHILLISKIRK	10.04.91
23	Daniel STURRIDGE	01.09.89
COACH		
Carlo ANCELOTTI (Ita)		10.06.59

COPENHAGEN (DEN)

GOALKEEPERS		
1	Kim CHRISTENSEN	16.07.79
21	Johan WILAND (Swe)	24.01.81
DEFENDERS		
15	Mikael ANTONSSON (Swe)	31.05.81
25	Mathias Zanka JORGENSEN	23.04.90
12	Peter LARSSON (Swe)	30.04.84
5	Solvi OTTESEN (Isr)	18.02.84
19	Bryan OVIEDO (CR)	18.02.90
2	Zdenek POSPECH (CzR)	14.12.78
17	Oscar WENDT (Swe)	24.10.85
29	Danni JENSEN	10.06.89
MIDFIELDERS		
7	Martin BERGVOLD	20.02.84
30	Christian BOLANOS (CR)	17.05.84
6	CLAUDEMIR (Bra)	27.03.88
27	Thomas DELANEY	03.09.91
16	Thomas KRISTENSEN	17.04.83
8	William KVIST	24.02.85
4	Hjalte NORREGAARD	08.04.81
20	Martin VINGAARD	20.03.85
FORWARDS		
23	Soren FREDERIKSEN	08.07.89
10	Jesper GRONKJAER	12.08.77
14	Dame N'DOYE (Sen)	21.02.85
9	Morten NORDSTRAND	08.06.83
28	Saban OZDOGAN	14.03.90
11	Cesar SANTIN (Bra)	24.02.81
18	Kenneth ZOHORE	30.01.94
COACH		
Stale SOLBAKKEN		27.02.58

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BASLE (SWI)

GOALKEEPERS		
23	Massimo COLOMBA	24.08.77
1	Franco COSTANZO (Arg)	05.09.80
18	Yann SOMMER	17.12.88
DEFENDERS		
19	David ABRAHAM (Arg)	15.07.86
4	Cagdas ATAN (Tur)	29.02.80
28	Beg FERATI	10.11.86
22	Samuel INKOOM (Gha)	01.06.89
21	Genseric KUSUNGA	12.03.88
20	Behrang SAFARI (Swe)	09.02.85
34	Granit XHAKA	27.09.92
16	Taulant XHAKA	28.03.91
32	Reto ZANNI	09.02.80
MIDFIELDERS		
24	CABRAL	22.10.88
11	Scott CHIPPERFIELD (Aus)	30.12.75
8	Benjamin HUGGEL	07.07.77
17	Xherdan SHAQIRI	10.10.91
14	Valentin STOCKER	12.04.89
26	Daniel UNAL	18.01.90
10	Gilles YAPI (IvC)	30.01.82
FORWARDS		
35	Matthias BARON (Ger)	17.08.88
15	Federico ALMERARES (Arg)	02.05.85
13	Alexander FREI	15.07.79
7	Pascal SCHURPF	15.07.89
9	Marco STRELLER	18.06.81
30	Fwayo TEMBO (Zam)	02.05.89
31	Jacques ZOUA (Cam)	06.09.91
COACH		
	Thorsten FINK (Ger)	28.10.67

BAYERN MUNICH (GER)

GOALKEEPERS		
1	Hans-Jorg BUTT	28.05.74
22	Rouven SATTELMAIER	07.08.87
35	Thomas KRAFT	22.07.88
DEFENDERS		
2	BRENO (Bra)	13.10.89
4	Edson BRAAFHEID (Hol)	08.04.83
5	Daniel VAN BUYTEN (Blg)	07.02.78
6	Martin DEMICHELIS (Arg)	20.12.80
21	Philipp LAHM	11.11.83
26	Diego CONTENTO	01.05.90
28	Holger BADSTUBER	13.03.89
29	Christoph KNASMULLNER (Aut)	30.04.92
32	Maximilian HAAS	07.12.85
34	Nicolas JULLICH	27.03.90
MIDFIELDERS		
7	Franck RIBERY (Fra)	07.04.83
8	Hamit ALTINTOP (Tur)	08.12.82
10	Arjen ROBBEN (Hol)	23.01.84
16	Andreas OTTL	01.03.85
17	Mark VAN BOMMEL (Hol)	22.04.77
23	Danijel PRANJIC (Cro)	01.12.81
27	David ALABA (Aut)	24.06.92
31	Bastian SCHWEINSTEIGER	01.08.84
39	Toni KROOS	04.01.90
44	Anatoliy TYMOSHCHUK (Ukr)	30.03.79
FORWARDS		
11	Ivica OLIC (Cro)	14.09.79
18	Miroslav KLOSE	09.06.78
25	Thomas MULLER	13.09.89
33	Mario GOMEZ	10.07.85
COACH		
	Louis VAN GAAL (Hol)	08.08.51

BENFICA (POR)

GOALKEEPERS		
13	JULIO CESAR (Bra)	02.09.86
1	MOREIRA	20.03.82
12	ROBERTO (Spa)	10.02.86
DEFENDERS		
25	CESAR PEIXOTO	12.05.80
23	DAVID LUIZ (Bra)	22.04.87
4	LUISAO (Bra)	13.02.81
14	Maxi PEREIRA (Uru)	08.06.84
15	RODERICK	30.03.91
27	SIDNEI (Bra)	23.08.89
MIDFIELDERS		
10	Pablo AIMAR (Arg)	03.11.79
2	AIRTON (Bra)	21.02.90
17	CARLOS MARTINS	29.04.82
18	FABIO COENTRAO	11.03.88
16	FELIPE MENEZES (Bra)	20.01.88
6	JAVI GARCIA (Spa)	08.02.87
5	RUBEN AMORIM	27.01.85
FORWARDS		
7	Oscar CARDOZO (Par)	20.05.83
20	Nicolas GAITAN (Arg)	23.02.88
11	Franco JARA (Arg)	15.07.88
31	Alan KARDEC (Bra)	12.01.89
21	NUNO GOMES	05.07.76
8	Eduardo SALVIO (Arg)	13.07.90
30	Javier SAVIOLA (Arg)	11.12.81
19	WELDON (Bra)	06.08.80
COACH		
	Jorge JESUS	24.07.54

BRAGA (POR)

GOALKEEPERS		
1	ARTUR MORAES (Bra)	25.01.81
42	CHRISTIANO	29.11.90
84	FELIPE (Bra)	22.02.84
DEFENDERS		
48	ANIBAL Capela	08.05.91
43	DANI	17.01.90
20	ELDERSON (Nig)	20.01.88
16	LEO FORTUNATO (Bra)	14.03.83
15	MIGUEL GARCIA	04.02.83
5	MOISES (Bra)	25.07.79
3	PAULAO (Bra)	06.05.82
2	Alberto RODRIGUEZ (Per)	31.03.84
28	SILVIO	28.09.87
MIDFIELDERS		
22	Luis AGUIAR (Uru)	17.11.85
30	ALAN (Bra)	19.09.79
23	ANDRES MADRID (Arg)	29.07.81
8	MARCIO MOSSORO (Bra)	04.07.83
56	NUNINHO	22.11.91
25	Leandro SALINO (Bra)	22.04.85
88	VANDINHO (Bra)	15.01.78
45	Hugo VIANA	15.01.83
FORWARDS		
85	ELTON (Bra)	01.08.85
10	HELDER BARBOSA	25.05.87
50	Januario JESUS	22.06.91
18	LIMA (Bra)	11.05.83
79	Joao MANUEL	21.02.92
99	MATHEUS (Bra)	15.01.83
9	PAULO CESAR (Bra)	05.01.80
39	TOUMANY (Sen)	21.12.91
COACH		
	Domingos PACIENCIA	02.01.69

HAPOEL TEL AVIV (ISR)

GOALKEEPERS		
22	Galil BEN-SHANAN	27.06.82
1	Vincent ENYEAMA (Nig)	29.08.82
33	Arie YANKO	21.12.91
DEFENDERS		
10	Walid BADIER	12.03.74
19	Dedi BEN-DAYAN	22.11.78
4	Dani BONDARV	07.02.87
3	Douglas DA SILVA (Bra)	07.03.84
6	Bevan FRANSMAN (SAf)	31.10.83
24	Yehuda HUTA	19.02.89
23	Omri KENDE	06.07.86
25	Gal SHISH	28.01.89
MIDFIELDERS		
18	Shay ABUTBUL	16.01.83
21	Roei GORDANA	06.07.90
27	Romain ROCCHI (Fra)	02.01.81
7	Yossi SHIVHON	22.03.82
15	Salim TOAMA	09.08.79
14	Gil VERMOUTH	05.08.85
26	Avihay YADIN	26.10.86
FORWARDS		
12	Victor MARE	31.05.89
11	Ben SAHAR	10.08.89
9	Etey SHECHTER	22.02.87
99	Toto TAMUZ	01.04.88
16	Eran ZAHAVI	25.07.87
17	Mahran LALA	07.03.82
COACH		
	Eli GUTTMAN	24.02.58

INTER (ITA)

GOALKEEPERS		
12	Luca CASTELLAZZI	19.07.75
92	Alberto GALLINETTA	16.04.92
1	JULIO CESAR (Bra)	03.09.79
21	Paolo ORLANDONI	12.08.72
DEFENDERS		
34	Cristiano BIRAGHI	01.09.92
26	Cristian CHIVU (Rom)	26.10.80
2	Ivan CORDOBA (Col)	11.08.76
6	LUCIO (Bra)	08.05.78
13	MAICON (Bra)	26.07.81
23	Marco MATERAZZI	19.08.73
25	Walter SAMUEL (Arg)	23.03.78
39	Davide SANTON	02.01.91
4	Javier ZANETTI (Arg)	10.08.73
MIDFIELDERS		
19	Esteban CAMBIASSO (Arg)	18.08.80
29	COUTINHO (Bra)	12.06.92
48	Lorenzo CRISETIG	20.01.93
30	MANCINI (Bra)	01.08.80
17	MacDonald MARIGA (Ken)	04.04.87
11	Sulley MUNTARI (Gha)	27.08.84
20	Joel OBI (Nig)	22.05.91
40	OBIORA Nwankwo (Nig)	12.07.91
35	Andrea ROMANO	23.07.93
10	Wesley SNEIJDER (Hol)	09.06.84
5	Dejan STANKOVIC (Ser)	11.09.78
8	THIAGO MOTTA (Bra)	28.08.82
FORWARDS		
88	Jonathan BIABIANY (Fra)	28.04.88
54	Simone DELL'AGNELLO	12.04.92
9	Samuel ETO'O (Cam)	10.03.81
22	Diego MILITO (Arg)	12.06.79
27	Goran PANDEV (Mac)	27.07.83
COACH		
	Rafael BENITEZ (Spa)	16.04.60

LYON (FRA)

GOALKEEPERS		
26	Joan HARTOCK	17.02.87
1	Hugo LLORIS	26.12.86
30	Remy VERCOUTRE	26.06.80
DEFENDERS		
20	Aly CISSOKHO	15.09.87
3	CRIS (Bra)	03.06.77
4	Pape DIAKHATE (Sen)	21.06.84
36	Sebastien FAURE	03.01.91
2	Lamine GASSAMA	02.10.89
12	Timothee KOLODZIEJCZAK	01.10.91
5	Dejan LOVREN (Cro)	07.05.89
13	Anthony REVEILLERE	10.11.79
35	Nicolas SEGUIN	06.03.90
MIDFIELDERS		
11	MICHEL BASTOS (Bra)	02.08.83
19	Cesar DELGADO (Arg)	18.08.81
10	EDERSON (Bra)	13.01.86
21	Maxime GONALONS	10.03.89
29	Yoann GOURCUFF	11.07.86
22	Clement GRENIER	07.01.91
6	Kim KALLSTROM (Swe)	24.08.82
34	Sidy KONE (Mli)	06.06.92
17	Jean MAKOUN (Cam)	29.05.83
8	Miralem PJANIC (Bos)	02.04.90
28	Jeremy TOULALAN	10.09.83
FORWARDS		
39	Ishak BELFODIL	12.01.92
7	Jimmy BRIAND	02.08.85
18	Bafetimbi GOMIS	06.08.85
38	Alexandre LACAZETTE	28.05.91
9	LISANDRO Lopez (Arg)	02.03.83
15	Harry NOVILLO	11.02.92
24	Jeremy PIED	23.02.89
COACH		
	Claude PUEL	02.09.61

MAN UNITED (ENG)

GOALKEEPERS		
40	Ben AMOS	10.04.90
29	Tomasz KUSZCZAK (Pol)	20.03.82
1	Edwin VAN DER SAR (Hol)	29.10.70
DEFENDERS		
6	Wes BROWN	13.10.79
23	Jonny EVANS (NI)	03.01.88
3	Patrice EVRA (Fra)	15.05.81
20	FABIO (Bra)	09.07.90
5	Rio FERDINAND	07.11.78
2	Gary NEVILLE	18.02.75
22	John O'SHEA (Ire)	30.04.81
21	RAFAEL (Bra)	09.07.90
12	Chris SMALLING	22.11.89
15	Nemanja VIDIC (Ser)	21.10.81
MIDFIELDERS		
8	ANDERSON (Bra)	13.04.88
16	Michael CARRICK	28.07.81
31	Corry EVANS (NI)	30.07.90
24	Darren FLETCHER (Sco)	01.02.84
28	Darron GIBSON (Ire)	25.10.87
11	Ryan GIGGS (Wal)	29.11.73
17	NANI (Por)	17.11.86
13	PARK Ji-sung (SKo)	25.02.81
18	Paul SCHOLES	16.11.74
25	Antonio VALENCIA (Ecu)	04.08.85
FORWARDS		
33	BEBE (Por)	12.07.90
9	Dimitar BERBATOV (Bul)	30.01.81
14	Javier HERNANDEZ (Mex)	01.06.88
27	Federico MACHEDA (Ita)	22.08.91
26	Gabriel OBERTAN (Fra)	26.02.89
7	Michael OWEN	14.12.79
10	Wayne ROONEY	24.10.85
COACH		
	Alex FERGUSON (Sco)	31.12.41

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UEFA CHAMPIONS LEAGUE

MARSEILLE (FRA)

GOALKEEPERS		
16	Elinton ANDRADE (Bra)	30.03.79
40	Samir KOUAKBI	27.02.90
30	Steve MANDANDA	28.03.85
1	Rudy RIOU	22.01.80
DEFENDERS		
2	Cesar AZPILICUETA (Spa)	28.08.89
21	Souleymane DIAWARA (Sen)	24.12.78
19	Gabriel HEINZE (Arg)	19.04.78
5	HILTON (Bra)	13.09.77
36	Christophe LOWINSKY	06.05.92
13	Senah MANGO (Tog)	13.12.91
14	Leyti N'DIAYE (Sen)	19.08.85
26	Jean-Philippe SABO	26.02.87
3	Taye TAIWO (Nig)	16.04.85
MIDFIELDERS		
32	Samir ABBES	06.03.90
18	Fabrice ABRIEL	06.07.79
7	Benoit CHEYROU	03.05.81
6	Edouard CISSE	30.03.78
12	Charles KABORE (BuF)	09.02.88
8	LUCHO GONZALEZ (Arg)	19.01.81
17	Stephane MBIA (Cam)	20.05.86
31	Florian MOULET	13.07.92
23	Alexander N'DOUMBOU (Gab)	04.01.92
34	Kevin OSEI	26.03.91
35	Thomas PECHART	07.02.91
28	Mathieu VALBUENA	28.09.84
FORWARDS		
20	Andre AYEW (Gha)	17.12.89
15	Jordan AYEW (Gha)	11.09.91
9	BRANDAO (Bra)	16.06.80
10	Andre-Pierre GIGNAC	05.12.85
11	Loic REMY	02.01.87
COACH		
	Didier DESCHAMPS	15.10.68

MILAN (ITA)

GOALKEEPERS		
32	Christian ABBIATI	08.07.77
1	Marco AMELIA	02.04.82
30	Flavio ROMA	21.06.74
DEFENDERS		
77	Luca ANTONINI	04.08.82
25	Daniele BONERA	31.05.81
18	Marek JANKULOVSKI (CzR)	09.05.77
13	Alessandro NESTA	19.03.76
17	Massimo ODDO	14.06.76
15	Sokratis PAPASTATHOPOULOS (Gre)	09.06.88
33	THIAGO SILVA (Bra)	22.09.84
76	Mario YEPES (Col)	13.01.76
19	Gianluca ZAMBROTTA	19.02.77
MIDFIELDERS		
20	Ignazio ABATE	12.11.86
23	Massimo AMBROSINI	29.05.77
27	Kevin-Prince BOATENG (Gha)	06.03.87
16	Mathieu FLAMINI (Fra)	07.03.84
8	Gennaro GATTUSO	09.01.78
52	Alexander MERKEL (Ger)	22.02.92
21	Andrea PIRLO	19.05.79
10	Clarence SEEDORF (Hol)	01.04.76
14	Rodney STRASSER (SLe)	30.03.90
FORWARDS		
11	Zlatan IBRAHIMOVIC (Swe)	03.10.81
9	Filippo INZAGHI	09.08.73
7	PATO (Bra)	02.09.89
70	ROBINHO (Bra)	25.01.84
80	RONALDINHO (Bra)	21.03.80
65	Simone VERDI	12.07.92
COACH		
	Massimiliano ALLEGRI	11.08.67

PANATHINAIKOS (GRE)

GOALKEEPERS		
66	Daniel FERNANDES (Por)	25.09.83
40	Stefanos KAPINOS	18.03.94
27	Orestis KARNEZIS	11.07.85
30	Alexandros TZORVAS	12.08.82
DEFENDERS		
4	Jean-Alain BOUMSONG (Fra)	14.12.79
5	Cedric KANTE (Mli)	06.07.79
3	Josu SARRIEGI (Spa)	19.01.79
2	Giourkas SEITARIDIS	04.06.81
31	Nikos SPYROPOULOS	10.10.83
45	Kostas TRIANTAFYLLOPOULOS	03.04.93
24	Loukas VYNTRA	05.02.81
MIDFIELDERS		
21	Elini DIMOUTSOS	18.06.88
15	GILBERTO SILVA (Bra)	07.10.76
8	Giorgos IOANNIDIS	04.05.88
26	Giorgos KARAGOUNIS	06.03.77
29	Kostas KATSOURANIS	21.06.79
43	Nikos KOUSIDIS	03.01.93
44	Tasos LAGOS	12.04.92
11	Sebastian LETO (Arg)	30.08.86
22	Stergos MARINOS	17.09.87
35	Charis MAVRIAS	21.02.94
7	Sotiris NINIS	03.04.90
19	Damien PLESSIS (Fra)	05.03.88
23	SIMAO (Moz)	23.07.88
FORWARDS		
20	Lazaros CHRISTODOULOPOULOS	19.12.86
9	Djibril CISSE (Fra)	12.08.81
10	Sidney GOVOU (Fra)	27.07.79
14	LUIS GARCIA (Spa)	24.06.78
28	Antonis PETROPOULOS	28.01.86
COACH		
	Nikos NIOPLIAS	17.01.65

PARTIZAN BELGRADE (SER)

GOALKEEPERS		
33	Radisa ILIC	20.09.77
88	Vladimir STOJKOVIC	28.07.83
12	Zivko ZIVKOVIC	14.04.89
DEFENDERS		
13	Marko JOVANOVIC	26.03.88
27	Joseph KIZITO (Uga)	27.07.82
20	Mladen KRSTAJIC	04.03.74
18	Aleksandar LAZEVSKI (Mac)	21.01.88
2	Aleksandar MILJKOVIC	26.02.90
24	Matija NASTASIC	28.03.93
15	Stefan SAVIC (Mne)	08.01.91
6	Vojislav STANKOVIC	22.09.87
3	Ivan STEVANOVIC	24.06.83
MIDFIELDERS		
25	Stefan BABOVIC	07.01.87
11	Pierre BOYA (Cam)	16.01.84
14	Darko BRASANAC	12.02.92
23	Aleksandar DAVIDOV	07.10.83
22	Sasa ILIC	30.12.77
4	MEDO (SLe)	16.11.87
10	Almami MOREIRA (Por)	16.06.78
8	Radosav PETROVIC	08.03.89
99	Milan SMILJANIC	19.11.86
7	Nemanja TOMIC	21.01.88
FORWARDS		
19	Milos BOGUNOVIC	10.06.85
9	CLEO (Bra)	09.08.85
77	Ivica ILJEV	27.10.79
31	Marko SCEPOVIC	23.05.91
COACH		
	Aleksandar STANOJEVIC	28.10.73

SCHALKE (GER)

GOALKEEPERS		
1	Manuel NEUER	27.03.86
33	Mathias SCHOBER	08.04.76
36	Lars UNNERSTALL	20.07.90
DEFENDERS		
3	Sergio ESCUDERO (Spa)	02.09.89
35	Frank FAHRENHORST	24.09.77
4	Benedikt HOWEDES	29.02.88
39	Marvin PACHAN	11.04.90
14	Kyriakos PAPADOPOULOS (Gre)	23.02.92
5	Nicolas PLESTAN (Fra)	02.06.81
2	Hans SARPEI (Gha)	28.06.76
21	Christoph METZELDER	05.11.80
22	Atsuto UCHIDA (JAP)	27.03.88
MIDFIELDERS		
11	Alexander BAUMJOHANN	23.01.87
27	Ciprian DEAC (Rom)	16.02.86
19	Mario GAVRANOVIC (Swi)	24.11.89
8	Junmin HAO (CHN)	24.03.87
23	Jermaine JONES	03.11.81
18	Jose Manuel JURADO (Spa)	29.06.86
12	Peer KLUGE	22.11.80
41	Danny LATZA	07.12.89
32	Joel MATIP (Cam)	08.08.91
28	Christoph MORITZ	27.01.90
10	Ivan RAKITIC (CRO)	10.03.88
13	Lukas SCHMITZ	13.10.88
40	Predrag STEVANOVIC (Ser)	03.03.91
FORWARDS		
9	EDU (Bra)	30.11.81
17	Jefferson FARFAN (Per)	26.10.84
25	Klaas-Jan HUNTELAAR (Hol)	12.08.83
26	Erik JENDRISEK (Slk)	26.10.86
7	RAUL (Spa)	27.06.77
COACH		
	Felix MAGATH	26.07.53

SHAKHTAR (UKR)

GOALKEEPERS		
12	Rustam KHUDZHAMOV	05.10.82
30	Andriy PYATOV	28.06.84
60	Artem TETENKO	12.02.91
DEFENDERS		
27	Dmytro CHYGRYNSKIY	07.11.86
36	Olexandr CHYZHOV	10.08.86
3	Tomas HUBSCHMAN (CzR)	04.09.81
32	Mykola ISHCHENKO	09.03.83
38	Serhiy KRYVTSOV	15.03.91
5	Olexandr KUCHER	22.10.82
44	Yaroslav RAKITSKIY	03.08.89
26	Razvan RAT (Rom)	26.05.81
13	Vyacheslav SHEVCHUK	13.05.79
MIDFIELDERS		
29	ALEX TEIXEIRA (Bra)	06.01.90
20	DOUGLAS COSTA (Bra)	14.09.90
7	FERNANDINHO (Bra)	04.05.85
19	Olexiy GAI	06.11.82
8	JADSON (Bra)	05.10.83
14	Vasyl KOBIN	24.05.85
33	Darijo SRNA (Cro)	01.05.82
15	Taras STEPANENKO	08.08.89
10	WILLIAN (Bra)	09.08.88
FORWARDS		
11	EDUARDO (Cro)	25.02.83
9	LUIZ ADRIANO (Bra)	12.04.87
22	Henrik MKHITARYAN (Arm)	21.01.89
90	Vitaliy VITSENETS	03.08.90
99	Marcelo MORENO (Bol)	18.06.87
COACH		
	Mircea LUCESCU (Rom)	29.07.45

SPARTAK MOSCOW (RUS)

GOALKEEPERS		
56	Aleksandr BELENOV	13.09.86
81	Andriy DYKAN (Ukr)	16.07.77
30	Sergei PESYAKOV	16.12.88
DEFENDERS		
18	Andrei IVANOV	08.10.88
16	Evgeni MAKEEV	24.07.89
64	Aiden MCGEADY (Irl)	04.04.86
19	Nicolas PAREJA (Arg)	19.01.84
5	Aleksandr SHESHUKOV	15.04.83
3	Martin STRANZL (Aut)	16.06.80
17	Marek SUCHY (CzR)	29.03.88
MIDFIELDERS		
12	ALEX (Bra)	25.03.82
27	Jano ANANIDZE (Geo)	10.10.92
8	Nikola DRINCIC (Mne)	07.09.84
7	IBSON (Bra)	07.11.83
37	Dmitri KAYUMOV	11.05.92
26	Anton KHODYREV	26.01.92
23	Igor KIREEV	17.02.92
99	Dmitri KOMBAROV	22.01.87
77	Kirill KOMBAROV	22.01.87
2	Christian MAIDANA (Arg)	24.01.87
33	Dmitri MALYAKA	15.01.90
48	Filip OZOBIC (Cro)	08.04.91
15	Sergei PARSHIVLYUK	18.03.89
6	Renat SABITOV	13.06.85
20	Aleksandr ZOTOV	27.08.90
FORWARDS		
9	ARI (Bra)	11.12.85
21	Nikita BAZHENOV	01.02.85
41	Vladimir OBUKHOV	08.02.92
89	Aleksandr PRUDNIKOV	26.02.89
11	WELLITON (Bra)	22.10.86
COACH		
	Valery KARPIN	02.02.69

TOTTENHAM (ENG)

GOALKEEPERS		
23	Carlo CUDICINI (Ita)	06.09.73
1	Heurelho GOMES (Bra)	15.02.81
37	Stipe PLETIKOSA (Cro)	08.01.79
DEFENDERS		
32	Benoit ASSOU-EKOTTO (Cam)	24.03.84
3	Gareth BALE (Wal)	16.07.89
19	Sebastien BASSONG (Cam)	09.07.86
41	Calum BUTCHER	26.02.91
45	Steven CAULKER	29.12.91
22	Vedran CORLUKA (Cro)	05.02.86
20	Michael DAWSON	18.11.83
13	William GALLAS (Fra)	17.08.77
2	Alan HUTTON (Sco)	30.11.84
4	Younes KABOUL (Fra)	04.01.86
26	Ledley KING	12.10.80
MIDFIELDERS		
5	David BENTLEY	27.08.84
6	Tom HUDDLESTONE	28.12.86
8	Jermaine JENAS	18.02.83
21	Niko KRANJCAR (Cro)	13.08.84
7	Aaron LENNON	16.04.87
29	Jake LIVERMORE	14.11.89
14	Luka MODRIC (Cro)	09.09.85
47	Jake NICHOLSON	19.07.92
24	Jamie O'HARA	25.09.86
12	Wilson PALACIOS (Hon)	29.07.84
11	Rafael VAN DER VAART (Hol)	11.02.83
FORWARDS		
15	Peter CROUCH	30.01.81
18	Jermain DEFOE	07.10.82
17	Giovani DOS SANTOS (Mex)	11.05.89
10	Robbie KEANE (Ire)	08.07.80
9	Roman PAVLYUCHENKO (Rus)	15.12.81
COACH		
	Harry REDKNAPP	02.03.47

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SQUADS 2010-11

RANGERS (SCO)

GOALKEEPERS		
31	Grant ADAM	16.04.91
25	Neil ALEXANDER	10.03.78
1	Allan MCGREGOR	31.01.82
DEFENDERS		
24	Madjid BOUGHERRA (Alg)	07.10.82
4	Kirk BROADFOOT	08.08.84
12	Richard FOSTER	31.07.85
23	Jordan MCMILLAN	16.10.88
5	Sasa PAPAC (Bos)	07.02.80
36	Ross PERRY	07.02.90
22	Andy WEBSTER	23.04.82
3	David WEIR	10.05.70
16	Steven WHITTAKER	16.06.84
MIDFIELDERS		
32	Thomas BENDIKSEN (Nor)	08.08.89
8	Steven DAVIS (NI)	01.01.85
7	Maurice EDU (USA)	18.04.86
10	John FLECK	24.08.91
41	Kyle HUTTON	05.02.91
6	Lee MCCULLOCH	14.05.78
37	Andrew SHINNIE	17.07.89
38	Stephen STIRLING	05.01.90
20	Vladimir WEISS (Slk)	30.11.89
FORWARDS		
19	James BEATTIE (Eng)	27.02.78
42	Archie CAMPBELL	10.01.91
48	Kane HEMMINGS	08.04.92
11	Kyle LAFFERTY (NI)	16.09.87
29	Andrew LITTLE (NI)	12.05.89
34	Rory LOY	19.03.88
9	Kenny MILLER	23.12.79
52	Kal NAISMITH	18.02.92
14	Steven NAISMITH	14.09.86
COACH		
	Walter SMITH	24.02.48

REAL MADRID (SPA)

GOALKEEPERS		
13	Antonio ADAN	13.05.87
1	Iker CASILLAS	20.05.81
25	Jerzy DUDEK (Pol)	23.03.73
DEFENDERS		
18	Raul ALBIOL	04.09.85
17	Alvaro ARBELOA	17.01.83
19	Ezequiel GARAY (Arg)	10.10.86
12	MARCELO (Bra)	12.05.88
15	David MATEOS	22.04.87
3	PEPE (Por)	26.02.83
2	RICARDO CARVALHO (Por)	18.05.78
4	SERGIO RAMOS	30.03.86
MIDFIELDERS		
16	Sergio CANALES	16.02.91
10	Lassana DIARRA (Fra)	10.03.85
6	Mahamadou DIARRA (Mli)	18.05.81
5	Fernando GAGO (Arg)	10.04.86
11	Esteban GRANERO	02.07.87
24	Sami KHEDIRA (Ger)	04.04.87
21	Pedro LEON	24.11.86
23	Mesut OZIL (Ger)	15.10.88
14	XABI ALONSO	25.11.81
FORWARDS		
9	Karim BENZEMA (Fra)	19.12.87
7	CRISTIANO RONALDO (Por)	05.02.85
22	Angel DI MARIA (Arg)	14.02.88
20	Gonzalo HIGUAIN (Arg)	10.12.87
8	KAKA (Bra)	22.04.82
COACH		
	Jose MOURINHO (Por)	26.01.63

ROMA (ITA)

GOALKEEPERS		
32	DONI (Bra)	22.10.79
27	JULIO SERGIO (Bra)	08.11.78
1	Bogdan LOBONT (Rom)	18.01.78
41	Mirko PIGLIACELLI	30.06.93
DEFENDERS		
25	Guillermo BURDISSO (Arg)	26.09.88
29	Nicolas BURDISSO (Arg)	12.04.81
77	Marco CASSETTI	29.05.77
3	Paolo CASTELLINI	25.03.79
2	CICINHO (Bra)	24.06.80
42	Paolo FRASCATORE	04.02.92
4	JUAN (Bra)	01.02.79
5	Philippe MEXES (Fra)	30.03.82
17	John Arne RIISE (Nor)	24.09.80
MIDFIELDERS		
33	Matteo BRIGHI	14.02.81
16	Daniele DE ROSSI	24.07.83
19	JULIO BAPTISTA (Bra)	01.10.81
23	Leandro GRECO	19.07.86
20	Simone PERROTTA	17.09.77
7	David PIZARRO (Chl)	11.09.79
87	Aleandro ROSI	17.05.87
30	Fabio SIMPLICIO (Bra)	23.09.79
11	Rodrigo TADDEI (Bra)	06.03.80
FORWARDS		
8	ADRIANO (Bra)	17.02.82
22	Marco BORRIELLO	18.06.82
94	Jeremy MENEZ (Fra)	07.05.87
43	Mattia MONTINI	28.02.92
89	Stefano OKAKA	09.08.89
10	Francesco TOTTI	27.09.76
9	Mirko VUCINIC (Mne)	01.10.83
COACH		
	Claudio RANIERI	20.10.51

RUBIN KAZAN (RUS)

GOALKEEPERS		
44	Giedrius ARLAUSKIS (Lit)	01.12.87
77	Sergei RYZHIKOV	19.09.80
DEFENDERS		
3	Cristian ANSALDI (Arg)	20.09.86
27	Salvatore BOCCHETTI (Ita)	30.11.86
4	CESAR NAVAS (Spa)	14.02.80
83	Vladimir CHERNOV	15.01.91
19	Vitali KALESHIN	03.10.80
2	Oleg KUZMIN	09.05.81
9	Lasha SALUKVADZE (Geo)	21.12.81
65	Maksim ZHESTOKOV	19.06.91
MIDFIELDERS		
23	Evgeni BALYAYKIN	19.05.88
81	Ildar BIKCHANTAEV	02.02.90
5	Petr BYSTROV	15.07.79
87	CARLOS EDUARDO (Bra)	18.07.87
61	Gokdeniz KARADENIZ (Tur)	11.01.80
14	Alan KASAEV	08.04.86
15	Rafal MURAWSKI (Pol)	09.10.81
66	Bebars NATCHO (Isr)	18.02.88
16	Christian NOBOA (Ecu)	09.04.85
22	Aleksandr OREKHOV	29.11.83
8	Aleksandr RYAZANTSEV	05.09.86
41	Ilsur SAMIGULLIN	06.02.91
6	MacBeth SIBAYA (SAf)	25.11.77
FORWARDS		
88	Sergei KORNILENKO (Bls)	14.06.83
28	Obafemi MARTINS (Nig)	28.10.84
26	Aleksei MEDVEDEV	05.01.77
92	Vakhyt ORAZSAKHEDOV (Tkm)	26.01.92
97	Igor PORTNYAGIN	07.01.89
COACH		
	Kurban BERDYEV	25.08.52

TWENTE (HOL)

GOALKEEPERS		
1	Sander BOSCHKER	20.10.70
16	Wilko DE VOGT	17.09.75
13	Nikolay MIHAYLOV (Bul)	28.06.88
DEFENDERS		
5	Rasmus BENGTSSON (Swe)	26.06.86
35	Thijs BOUMA	02.04.92
23	Bart BUYSSE (Blg)	16.10.86
19	DOUGLAS (Bra)	12.01.88
3	Nicky KUIPER	07.06.89
34	Thilo LEUGERS (Ger)	09.01.91
15	Roberto ROSALES (Ven)	20.11.88
36	Michael SCHIMPELSBERGER (Aut)	12.02.91
37	Mitch STOCKENTREE	22.01.91
40	Stefan THESKER (Ger)	11.04.91
33	Dwight TIENDALLI	21.10.85
4	Peter WISGERHOF	19.11.79
MIDFIELDERS		
11	Emir BAJRAMI (Swe)	07.03.88
20	Steven BERGHUIS	19.12.91
6	Wout BRAMA	21.08.86
47	Thomas BRUNS	07.01.92
8	Theo JANSSEN	27.07.81
7	Denny LANDZAAT	06.05.76
14	Bernard PARKER (SAf)	16.03.86
27	Dario VUJICEVIC (Bos)	01.04.90
FORWARDS		
22	Nacer CHADLI (Blg)	02.08.89
9	Luuk DE JONG	27.08.90
39	Ninos GOURIYE	14.01.91
21	Marc JANKO (Aut)	25.06.83
32	Flamur KASTRATI (Nor)	14.11.91
42	Petteri PENNANEN (Fin)	19.09.90
10	Bryan RUIZ (CR)	18.08.85
COACH		
	Michel PREUD'HOMME (Blg)	24.01.59

VALENCIA (SPA)

GOALKEEPERS		
1	CESAR Sanchez	02.09.71
30	Javi GONZALEZ	31.03.92
13	Vicente GUAITA	18.02.87
25	Miguel Angel MOYA	02.04.84
DEFENDERS		
2	BRUNO Saltor	01.10.80
4	DAVID NAVARRO	25.05.80
15	Angel DEALBERT	01.01.83
33	David FORNIES	06.02.91
22	Jeremy MATHIEU (Fra)	29.10.83
23	MIGUEL (Por)	04.01.80
32	Nacho PORCAR	10.07.92
20	RICARDO COSTA (Por)	16.05.81
MIDFIELDERS		
28	Jordi ALBA	21.03.89
6	David ALBELDA	01.09.77
21	Ever BANEGA (Arg)	29.06.88
24	Tino COSTA (Arg)	09.01.85
12	Sofiane FEGHOULI (Fra)	26.12.89
18	Manuel FERNANDES (Por)	05.02.86
35	IVAN	01.03.91
7	JOAQUIN	21.07.81
3	Hedwiges MADURO (Hol)	13.02.85
10	Juan MATA	28.04.88
19	PABLO Hernandez	11.04.85
5	Mehmet TOPAL (Tur)	03.03.86
14	VICENTE	16.07.81
FORWARDS		
11	Aritz ADURIZ	11.02.81
8	Alejandro DOMINGUEZ (Arg)	10.06.81
26	ISCO	21.04.92
9	Roberto SOLDADO	27.05.85
34	Enrique TORTOSA	10.02.91
COACH		
	Unai EMERY	03.11.71

WERDER BREMEN (GER)

GOALKEEPERS		
21	Sebastian MIELITZ	18.07.89
33	Christian VANDER	24.10.80
42	Felix WIEDWALD	15.03.90
1	Tim WIESE	17.12.81
DEFENDERS		
27	Niklas ANDERSEN	04.08.88
2	Sebastian BOENISCH (Pol)	01.02.87
8	Clemens FRITZ	07.12.80
29	Per MERTESACKER	29.09.84
4	NALDO (Bra)	10.09.82
3	Petri PASANEN (Fin)	24.09.80
15	Sebastian PRODL (Aut)	21.06.87
41	Dominik SCHMIDT	01.07.87
16	Mikael SILVESTRE (Fra)	09.08.77
MIDFIELDERS		
44	Philipp BARGFREDE	03.03.89
6	Tim BOROWSKI	02.05.80
22	Torsten FRINGS	22.11.76
14	Aaron HUNT	04.09.86
17	Said HUSEJINOVIC (Bos)	13.05.88
20	Daniel JENSEN (Den)	25.06.79
10	Marko MARIN	13.03.89
5	WESLEY (Bra)	24.06.87
FORWARDS		
23	Hugo ALMEIDA (Por)	23.05.84
7	Marko ARNAUTOVIC (Aut)	19.04.89
46	Onur AYIK (Tur)	28.01.90
18	Felix KROOS	12.03.91
24	Claudio PIZARRO (Per)	03.10.78
19	Sandro WAGNER	29.11.87
COACH		
	Thomas SCHAAF	30.04.61

ZILINA (SLK)

GOALKEEPERS		
30	Martin DUBRAVKA	15.01.89
22	Martin KRNAC	30.01.85
35	Frantisek PLACH	08.03.92
33	Matej RAKOVAN	14.03.90
DEFENDERS		
2	Stanislav ANGELOVIC	26.03.82
24	Juraj CHUPAC	17.03.88
5	Lubomir GULDAN	30.01.83
7	Vladimir LEITNER	28.06.74
3	Mario PECALKA	28.12.80
15	Jozef PIACEK	20.06.83
16	Martin POLET	31.08.90
23	Ondrej SOUREK (CzR)	26.04.83
MIDFIELDERS		
42	Roman GERGEL	22.02.88
12	Robert JEZ	10.07.81
6	Patrik MRAZ	01.02.87
21	Pavol POLIACEK	04.02.88
9	Emil RILKE (CzR)	19.11.83
20	Michal SKVARKA	19.08.92
37	Sergio VITTOR (Arg)	09.06.89
44	Admir VLADAVIC (Bos)	29.06.82
11	Martin VYSKOCIL (CzR)	15.09.82
4	Adam ZILAK	07.12.91
27	Stefan ZOSAK	03.04.84
FORWARDS		
28	Babatounde BELLO (Nig)	06.10.89
18	Momodou CEESAY (Gam)	24.12.88
25	Dennis CHRISTU (CzR)	27.07.89
19	Dominik FOTYIK	16.09.90
10	Tomas MAJTAN	30.03.87
14	Tomas ORAVEC	03.07.80
COACH		
	Pavel HAPAL (CzR)	27.07.69

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Famous Last Words

Who said what and why

"He should go on The Muppet Show. That man should be on a couch. Maybe someone would be able to help him there. Commit him – best to an asylum"

Werder Bremen's Tim Wiese doesn't take kindly to criticism of his goalkeeping from former Germany no1 Jens Lehmann

Joke figure...Wiese (above) and Lehman (right) aren't exactly close

"It could take months, or we might never even get there"

Laurent Blanc reflects on the task facing him as France coach

"Now it seems that everything is valid in the world of football. He was hunted. Anything goes on to stop the big players"

Gerard Pique hits out at Atletico Madrid's treatment of Barcelona team-mate Lionel Messi

Injured...Messi

"At Liverpool the directors did not understand a thing about football, whereas with [Inter president Massimo] Moratti you can talk to him. He is a man who knows his football"

Internazionale boss Rafa Benitez has a dig at his old employers

"The grass on our training pitch is so high that all the sheep in the Faroes would take a month to eat it"

Faroe Islands coach Brian Kerr complains about the facilities ahead of his team's Euro 2012 qualifier in Italy

Modest...Allardyce

"I'm not suited to Bolton or Blackburn. I'd be more suited to Inter or Real Madrid. I'd win the double or league every time"

Sam Allardyce thinks big

"To beat Napoli would be like having a huge sporting orgasm"

Bari coach Giampiero Ventura gets excited at the thought of victory over his former club

"We don't know much about Ben Arfa"

BBC pundit Alan Shearer reveals his lack of knowledge of Newcastle United's new signing

"If I was a free agent, I would go tomorrow"

Jose Mourinho laments Real Madrid's refusal to let him discuss taking temporary charge of the Portugal national side

"They are clowns playing to the gallery. I've moved on. I already wear a blue shirt at Chelsea. That'll do for me"

Nicolas Anelka responds to his 18-match international ban from the French federation

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